

Hafa Adai!

Alternative to dealing with growing pile of trash at landfill. **PAGE 2**
Blocked sewer line causes wastewater service interruption. **PAGE 7**

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'We will not risk decisions that could jeopardize human life'

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

With Israel initiating a ban on

visitors who recently traveled to Japan and South Korea following a spike in coronavirus cases on both countries, ques-

tions of whether the CNMI would follow suit remains in the air.

Since China became sub-

ject to travel restrictions last January, the CNMI has been counting on visitors from Japan and Korea to keep its

tourism economy afloat.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' chief of staff, Angel A. Demapan, said the administration

has been monitoring the situation in both Japan and South Korea—the priority being

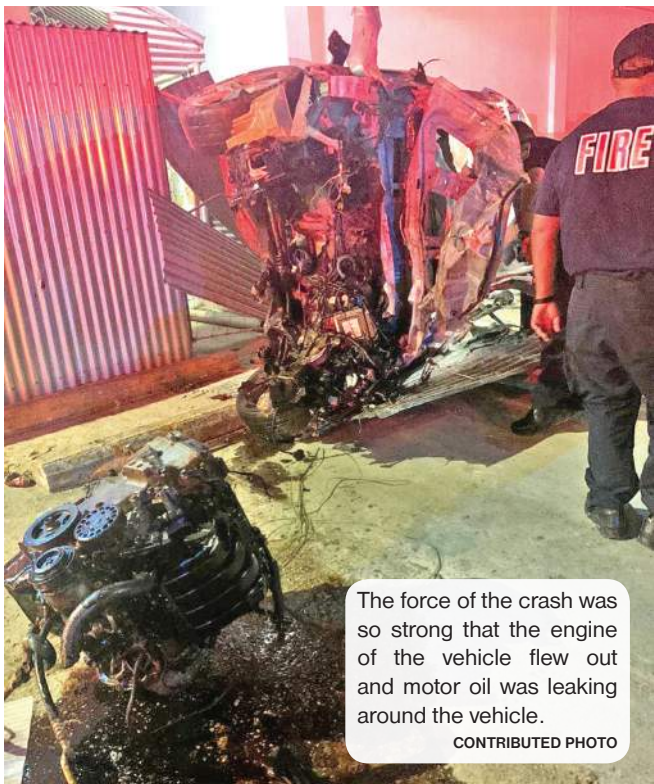
See RISK on Page 4

Man drowns on Managaha

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The CNMI saw its first drowning this year, with a 53-year-old Korean male tourist being pronounced dead last Saturday after drowning

Alleged drunk driver crashes into a wall



The force of the crash was so strong that the engine of the vehicle flew out and motor oil was leaking around the vehicle.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

A man who was allegedly

driving under the influence of alcohol ran off the road and crashed into a concrete barrier

See DRIVER on Page 4

on Managaha Island.

A DPS press release stated that DPS received a 911 call at about 12:24pm last Saturday, reporting a drowning incident on the island of Managaha. Dispatch summoned DPS Boating Safety and medics to remain on stand-by on Saipan as the victim was transported by a vessel into the Smiling Cove Marina.

The vessel arrived at the marina at approximately 12:31pm, with two lifeguards

trying to revive the victim via cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Medics immediately took over from the lifeguards in doing CPR, as an ambulance speedily brought the victim to the Commonwealth Health Center.

At approximately 12:50pm, the victim was pronounced dead despite efforts by nurses and doctors to revive him.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pange-

See MAN on Page 4

Malaysia PM Mahathir resigns

By EILEEN NG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia

(AP)—Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad tendered his resignation to Malaysia's king on Monday while his party quit the ruling



Mahathir

in a shocking political upheaval less than two years after his election victory.

The prime minister's office said in a brief statement that Mahathir, 94, submitted his resignation to the palace at

political alliance,

1 p.m. but gave no further de-

See MALAYSIA on Page 4

BACKYARD GARDENING

A staff of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources teaches Kagman students how to plant a seed as part of the backyard gardening after-school program at the Kagman Community Center last Feb. 19.

JUSTINE NAUTA

Story on Page 4



INSIDE



ASIA

South Korea reported an eight-fold jump in viral infections, with more than new 400 cases.

PAGE 15



OVERDRIVE

Kia's newest cross-over, the Seltos, takes its name from Celtus, the son of Hercules.

PAGE 18



LIFE & STYLE

Several cities in western Germany canceled their carnival parades due to bad weather.

PAGE 21



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A LIFETIME OF SUNSETS

All legal residents of the Northern Marianas Islands including non-U.S. citizens are eligible to apply. Applicant households may be families or groups of unrelated individuals. Eligibility requirements are based on household size and income limits established by the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.

Local

Alternative to dealing with growing pile of Marpi trash

A waste energy company gave a presentation Friday at the House of the Representatives on gasification technology as an alternative way of dealing with the growing pile of trash at the Marpi landfill.

Norman Tenorio of Joeten Enterprises, which is a local partner of Wisconsin-based Alliance Federated Energy, explained that gasification technology essentially involves burning the waste and converting it to renewable energy. Zoning Board chair Mariano Taitano assisted Tenorio at the presentation.

In a later interview, Tenorio said he just read in the newspapers that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' administration is exploring ways on how to handle the waste at the Marpi landfill. "We're basically revisiting the same issue that we started about seven years ago," said Tenorio, adding that he just let the legislators know that there is an alternative in how to take care of the issue.

Tenorio said that Alliance Federated Energy Saipan is a local renewable energy company but they have partners out of the United States and Canada. He said the company will pro-

duce clean synthesis gas that can be converted to electricity or supplement the power supply of the current CUC system. Depending on the waste throughput, the project can produce 2.5 to 5 megawatt of base load electrical power via reciprocating engines.

House Public Utilities, Transportation and Communication Committee chair Rep. Marco T. Peter (R-Saipan) said they learned that there was a request for proposals in 2013 regarding one of the renewable energies.

"We just want to find out the status, whatever happened to it," Peter said.

The lawmaker said if the company will be able to produce that much energy for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. then it could be a benefit to the CNMI.

It was reported in 2013 that Alliance Federated Energy plans to build a \$40- to \$50-million waste-to-energy project on Saipan to help prolong the Marpi landfill's lifespan.

Under AFE's proposed project, the CNMI government will supply trash to the company and then buy the "byproduct" energy from the firm. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

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First ever Chamorro-Carolinian Mother Language Day kicks off

IVA MAURIN
The CNMI marked its first ever celebration of the Chamorro-Carolinian Mother Language Day, through a proclamation signing held yesterday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

Bolstered by the twin pillars of culture and identity, the very first celebration of the Chamorro-Carolinian Mother Language Day in the CNMI kicked off yesterday with a proclamation signing at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

Advocates of both the indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian (Refaluwasch) were the focus of attention in yesterday's occasion, which also celebrates 2020 as the Year of the Indigenous Language.

"Gov. [Ralph DLG] Torres and I strongly encourage our NMI family to band together and raise awareness about the importance of supporting the goals and ideals of Mother Language Day and to bring attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage throughout the Commonwealth," said Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios at the proclamation.

Palacios also urged everyone to support the movement through the display of exhibits, posters, signs, and through music and dance, to promote the mother languages.

"In these days of rapid communications through the internet and other types of communication, it is very important to reflect and put all efforts we have to preserve who we are, at least through our language," he said.

The lieutenant governor also expressed appreciation to everyone who has worked tirelessly to ensure that programs are put in place to preserve "who we are."

Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission executive director Melvin LO. Faisao

said that the declaration of 2020 as the Year of the Indigenous Languages is meant to raise awareness of them, not only for the people who speak the languages, but for others to appreciate the role languages play in the Commonwealth's rich cultural diversity.

"Languages play a crucial role in the daily lives of people, not only as a tool for communication, education, social integration and development, but also as a repository for each person's unique identity, cultural history, traditions and memory," Faisao added.

Jackie Quitugua, Public School System associate commissioner for Instructional Services, encouraged the youth to learn the languages and appealed to the community, especially parents, to follow suit.

Representing the new generation of language advocates are students from Hopwood Middle School, with Yerma Camacho and Tinalyn Litulumar, who read the proclamation in Chamorro and Carolinian. (Iva Maurin)

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Construction company files defamation suit vs IPI

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A former construction contractor for Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC filed yesterday a defamation lawsuit in federal court against IPI for issuing statements published in two newspapers that allegedly contained libelous statements.

USA Fanter Corp. Ltd., through counsel Samuel I. Mok, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold IPI liable to pay an unspecified amount of damages.

USA Fanter also asked the court

to require IPI to make a public retraction of the allegedly defamatory statements at issue.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from IPI but the company had yet to reply as of press time yesterday.

USA Fanter said that IPI owes the company \$2.08 million for construction work related to the VIP wing and exterior work of the hotel-casino that is currently being built in Garapan.

Mok said IPI transmitted its libelous statements to *Saipan Tribune* and *Marianas Variety* on Dec. 19, 2019 and Dec. 20, 2019, respectively.

Mok said IPI stated that USA Fanter purportedly lied about the actual construction work performed, issued false reports, forged project quantity numbers, forged a payment, fabricated units of material used, fabricated prices, and double-billed for work performed.

Mok said IPI's statements were false and defamatory and that USA Fanter's business reputation was adversely affected as a result.

The lawyer said USA Fanter demanded a retraction of the defamatory statements at issue which IPI has thus far declined to do.

DYS to offer backyard gardening

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Youth Services recently kicked off its after-school program with a backyard gardening program that will teach students and families basic farming skills.

The backyard gardening program is a partnership through the CNMI Nutrition Health Console, Division of Agroforestry under the Division of Lands and Natural Resources, and the Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services.

According to Vivian Sablan, DYS administrator, the idea of backyard gardening has two aims: first, grow the crops; and, once they are fully grown, use the crops for an after-school cooking class; and two, to take it home for families to use. No crops will be sold for profit, she added.

Recently, a DLNR employee taught Kagman students how to plant corn and cucumber. They will later plant tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and more.

"We're trying to teach the kids life skills, specifically farming, so they don't have to always rely on the market to purchase their vegetables if they already have their own garden," said Sablan.

John Reyes, community development technical support of DYS, helped kick off this program. Reyes assisted DLNR in tilling the crop area to make sure the ground was soft enough for the children to start planting corn and cucumber seeds.

Sablan hopes that not just the Kagman community but everyone else will become a part of this program so that they can also learn farming skills and have their own crops to take home.

MALAYSIA

From Page 1

tails. Mahathir also quit as chairman of his Bersatu party.

The stunning turn of events come amid plans by Mahathir's supporters in Bersatu to team with opposition parties to form a new government and thwart the transition of power to his named successor, Anwar Ibrahim.

Minutes before his resignation was offered, Bersatu said it would leave the four-party Alliance of Hope and support Mahathir as the prime minister. Eleven other lawmakers, including several Cabinet ministers, also announced they are quitting Anwar's party to form an independent bloc.

The withdrawal of more than three dozen lawmakers means the ruling alliance has lost its majority in Parliament, throwing the country into an uncertain future and sparking fears of more turmoil over how the political drama will play out.

Opinions are divided on whether

Mahathir is quitting for good or making a tactical move to buy time to cobble together a new majority to form a government.

King Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, who met Bersatu and several other leaders on Sunday, met Anwar on Monday afternoon and summoned Mahathir to the palace. Analysts said the king could decide on which faction has the support or dissolve Parliament for snap elections.

The political drama unraveled Sunday with maneuvers aimed at keeping Mahathir in power and thwarting Anwar, replaying their decades-old feud. Anwar was Mahathir's deputy during Mahathir's first stint as prime minister but fell out politically before reuniting in the political pact that ousted a corruption-tainted government in the May 2018 election. Mahathir has refused to set a date to relinquish power despite a preelection agreement to hand over power to Anwar.

Anwar confirmed late Sunday there were attempts by some Ber-

satu members and "traitors" from his party to form a new government in a "betrayal" of their political pact. He said Monday after meeting Mahathir with other alliance leaders that Mahathir had quit as he didn't want to be associated with the former government that he worked so hard to oust in 2018 polls.

"His name was used, by those within my party and outside," Anwar told reporters. Mahathir "reiterated to me what he had said earlier, that he played no part in it and he made it very clear, that in no way will he ever work with those associated with the past regime," he added.

Ironically, the maneuvers would restore to power the Malay party of disgraced former leader Najib Razak, who with several of his party leaders are standing trial for corruption. It would also propel to national power a fundamentalist Islamic party that rules two states and champions Islamic laws. The two Malay parties still have strong support from ethnic Malays, who account for 60% of Malaysia's 32 million people.

at that, to date.

"We will continue those efforts, because our priority is to make sure that our community remains healthy, remains safe, and that our people [are] kept in a safe environment. We will do every effort to continue monitoring all our inbound travelers to make sure that we intercept any problematic or presumed cases at our port of entry before it gets out into our community," he added.

As far as community concerns over an increase in prices of imported goods following quarantine procedures, he reiterated that safety is a priority.

"Right now, the priority is safety and, if having to quarantine imported goods and products [will] ensure safety, then we will continue to do that. We will prioritize the quarantine process for any products that we think have come from a coronavirus area, or any product that we think is contaminated," Demapan said.

"Paramount above everything is the safety of our community so we will prioritize the quarantine process by any means necessary. There are concerns about supply and demand and whether prices of commodities will go up. At this point in time, I think the human life is more expensive than any other price, and we will not risk making decisions that will jeopardize human life."

the government within our means. If that means reducing the work hours, then that's a decision the administration has made.

"At this point in time, it comes down to decisions that are necessary, and not decisions that are unpopular. We need to make the tough decisions and in these times of economic challenges, it really calls upon bold and decisive leadership from all our leaders," Demapan added.

He did not give any timelines as to when austerity measures will end.

"We do not have a timeline because we don't know what to expect. We don't know the longevity of the coronavirus outbreak," he said. "So, not knowing how long that will impact us, we will prepare by fiscal year and, so for this fiscal year, we're prepared as if this impact is going to last the entire fiscal year."

Safety is the priority

The CNMI has yet to have a single case of the coronavirus. The Commonwealth Health Care Corp. recently stated that a sample of a low-priority suspected COVID-19 case that it had sent to the Centers for Disease Control for evaluation has tested negative for coronavirus.

Demapan said that the administration, with all its partners, has taken every step to make sure that the islands remain a coronavirus-free destination, and has been very successful

MAN

From Page 1

linan separately confirmed that the victim was pronounced dead at about 12:50pm Saturday.

A preliminary investigation revealed that swimmers in the area had flagged the attention of the lifeguard on duty to check on a swimmer. The lifeguard noticed the victim was face down in the water and immediately rushed toward the victim. The lifeguard dragged the victim ashore and began to perform CPR on him while others called 911.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, a woman nearly drowned at the Grotto dive site in Marpi last Jan.

2, but witnesses managed to pull her out of the water and she did not have to be resuscitated.

The female victim was trying to cross over to the main rock before the current came in and swept her into the water. The female victim was stuck under water for about a minute before other witnesses saw her head appear above the water. At that time, one of the divers ran up to call for help.

Other witnesses in the area managed to pull the victim out of the water. The victim was responsive and breathing. CPR did not have to be performed, but the victim was placed on a spine board and transported to the Commonwealth Health Center, where she was treated for lacerations, abrasions, and bruising.

RISK

From Page 1

to ensure that the islands are kept a coronavirus-free destination.

"We're continuing to do our monitoring. ... We believe we have an operation that has been very effective. To date, we remain a coronavirus-free destination," Demapan said. "[We] understand that there's some new developments in Korea and Japan, and we continue to monitor those situations. I know that it's a much more amplified issue in South Korea, so we're trying to make sure that we look at that, the proximities of where those cases are, [and] whether those are isolated cases in a specific region."

The result of that monitoring will serve as a guideline on whether to recalibrate efforts in attracting tourists into the CNMI, Demapan said, adding that there are still a lot of countries that are free to travel.

"We'd like them to know that the Marianas is open," Demapan added.

Operating within our means

As a tourist-based economy and being an island destination, any issue that affects the tourism industry impacts the economy, Demapan said. "What we're doing in response to the economic challenges is we're making sure that we continue to operate

using a jaws-of-life tool.

After Raupei was removed from the vehicle, he was immediately transported to the Commonwealth Health Center for treatment. He was treated for multiple lacerations to his head, left arm, left elbow, and a fractured skull. He was admitted for further observation but he is currently in stable condition.

Police noted that the force of the crash was so strong that the engine of the vehicle flew out and motor oil was leaking around the vehicle.

When asked later, Raupei does not recall what caused the vehicle to swerve and run off the road.

Eyewitnesses told police that the vehicle was traveling south on the inner lane at a high rate of speed, before hitting the center median in the middle of the roadway. The vehicle then swerved to the right, hitting several sign posts, trees, construction gate barriers, and the retaining wall of Welcome Market before coming to a complete stop.

Police noticed a few empty beer cans within the vehicle that looked like they had just been drunk and a blood test revealed that Raupei had a blood alcohol level of .106%, much higher than the allowable limit of .08.

The CNMI Department of Public Safety encourages the public to call 911 anytime to report a crime or an emergency.

DRIVER

From Page 1

near a store in San Roque last Friday.

Arthur Raupei, 31, was cited for driving under the influence of alcohol, among a long list of violations, after police had to extract him from a vehicle that he crashed into a concrete barrier next to the Welcome Market in San Roque.

Raupei was also cited for failing to maintain the right side of the highway, operating a motor vehicle without a driver's license, speeding, and reckless driving.

Raupei is currently in stable condition following the accident but sustained some major and minor injuries.

According to a press release from the Department of Public Safety, DPS dispatch received a 911 call at about 9:10pm last Friday, reporting that a vehicle ran off the road and rammed a concrete barrier in San Roque.

At the scene, officers came upon onlookers surrounding the vehicle and taking photos and video of the vehicle that was resting on its driver's side atop a concrete barrier separating Welcome Market and the establishment next to it.

Police secured the scene and, with the help of medics, extracted Raupei out of a blue 2013 Hyundai Elantra



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INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-20-010

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF POWER DISTRIBUTION ANNUAL MATERIALS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified vendors for the Supply and Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials for Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials, based on bids for "Commodity Groups".

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-20-010, Supply & Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials, Saipan, CNMI" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 6, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. *An electronic copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent via email to CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.*

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. The Bid bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director's approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 21, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC Senior Purchasing Technician via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org, Joseph Crisostomo, CUC Power Division, Purchasing Technician via email joseph.crisostomo@cucgov.org and Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division, Engineer via email alfred.palattao@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

McDonald's donates \$5K to MCS

McDonald's Saipan owner/operator Marcia E. Ayuyu, right, presents a check for \$5,000 that will be used to aid Mount Carmel School students. Receiving the donation are, from left, MCS president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Maria Ayuyu, Bernard Marcelo, Trinity Cruz, and John San Nicolas at the Mount Carmel School last Feb. 21.

JUSTINE NAUTA



By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

McDonald's Saipan recently gave the Mount Carmel School \$5,000—the maximum amount allowed as an education tax credit donation—that will be used to fund the school's academic programs and student services and support upcoming student life events.

MCS also intends to use the money to have more events that will benefit the school and

student to student interactions.

Marcia E. Ayuyu, McDonald's Saipan owner/operator, who recently turned over the donation to the school, said that the company appreciates Mount Carmel School's work to provide students a Catholic education.

MCS president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero said that McDonald's has always been a major supporter of education, "and we are grateful for the company's long-time sup-

port of MCS."

He also pointed out that the Ayuyu family, which owns McDonald's Saipan, has always shown its support by sending all of their four children to MCS, where they graduated and that it is very meaningful for the Ayuyu children to be a part of a long-time legacy at MCS.

For information about Mount Carmel School's available programs and services, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com.



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Blocked sewer line causes wastewater service interruption

There is currently an emergency wastewater service interruption for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the areas of Gualo Rai and China Town.

This will affect the wastewater services for CUC customers who live in the areas of Gualo Rai and on Chalan Pale Arnold Road from Transamerica to the Sugar King Park in Garapan.

This emergency wastewater service interruption is due to a sewer line blockage near the Garapan Central Park intersection. Last Feb. 13, CUC received a trouble call reporting a wastewater overflow. The

overflow was caused when the Department of Public Works' contractor poured cement to address a cave-in nearby a storm drain located in front of the Garapan Central Park. In the process of filling in the cave-in, the cement entered a sewer manhole and collections system. The hardened cement caused a blockage in the collections system, thus affecting sewer service.

Over the past week, CUC wastewater operators have been working on removing the cement in the affected manhole and sewer main to prevent any sewer overflows.

However, it was discovered on the evening of Friday, Feb. 21, that the upstream 10-inch

sewer main was filled with approximately 30 feet of cement. As a result, CUC installed a temporary bypass system on the outer northbound lane on

Chalan Pale Arnold from the Taro Sue Store to the front of the Garapan Central Park.

The running of the wastewater bypass line requires the

northbound lane to be closed until the blocked section of sewer main and manhole is replaced. Updates will follow as soon as they are available. (PR)

Kilili announces 2020 Congressional Art Competition

WASHINGTON, D.C.—High school students in the Northern Mariana Islands are invited to participate in the 12th Annual Congressional Art Competition. The winning artist from the Northern Marianas will have his or her artwork publicly displayed at the U.S. Capitol for one year, receive an invitation to the national winner's reception in Washington, D.C., and may

be eligible for scholarships to the Savannah College of Art and Design.

CNMI students have been participating in this contest since 2009.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), along with Rep. Warren Davidson of Ohio's 8th district, is this year's chairman for the national competition.


The competition is free

and open to all high school students. Students have until Friday, April 24, 2020, at 5pm to submit their artwork to the congressional office on Saipan, Tinian, or Rota.


Artwork submissions must be two-dimensional. Eligible artwork includes paintings, drawings, collages, prints, mixed media art, computer-generated art, and photography.

This year's submissions will be judged based on originality, technical difficulty, creativity, communication, effectiveness, and overall appearance. A panel of local artists will select the winning entry.

Contest guidelines and student release forms are available at <https://sablan.house.gov/serving-you/art-competition>. For more information, contact the congressional office at (670) 323-2647 or Kilili@mail.house.gov. (PR)



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 SAIPAN, MP 96950



PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Sixteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. at the Board of Education Conference Room, Building 1241, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA¹

- I. **PRELIMINARY**
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
- II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS²**
- III. **REPORTS**
 1. Chair
 2. Board Committees
 - a. CIP
 - b. FPA
 - c. ISA
 - d. LIA
 - e. SICPP
 - f. SARC
 3. **Commissioner of Education**
 - a. Financial Status Reports
 - i. Federal
 - ii. Local
 - b. Head Start Program
 - c. Others:
- IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- V. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. Ratifications:
 - a. Pupil Transportation Proclamation
 - b. BOE-PSS Comments to Senate Bill No. 21-49
 2. Da'ok Academy Relocation Site
 3. Da'ok Academy Building Proposal
 4. Proposed Austerity Measures
 5. FY2021 Budget Proposal
 6. SY2020-2021 Schedule
 7. Certification and Licensure Matters
 - a. CLO Report No. 2020-02
- VI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION³**
 1. Legal Updates
 2. Personnel
 3. Other matters
- VII. **DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING**
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

¹In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.

²Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

³Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.



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 2020 TOYOTA COROLLA 4-cyl., Blue Print, Est. Mileage: 10,176 Stock #R19067B NOW \$21,999*	 2017 TOYOTA RAV 4 White, Est. Mileage: 33,602 Stock #U19123P NOW \$21,999*	 2020 TOYOTA COROLLA Classic Silver Metallic, 4-cyl. Est. Mileage: 9,466, Stock #R20004F NOW \$22,599*	 2018 TOYOTA RAV 4 Midnight Blue Metallic, 4-cyl. Est. Mileage: 29,507, Stock #SP20F0013 NOW \$23,499*	 SOLD 2018 TOYOTA PRE-RUNNER Silver Sky Metallic, 4-cyl. Est. Mileage: 13,888, Stock #SP20R0008 NOW \$23,799*
 2018 TOYOTA RAV 4 4-cyl., Barcelona Red Metallic, Est. Mileage: 23,627, Stock #R19047B NOW \$23,999*	 2016 CHEVY EXPRESS 15-passenger van, Olympic White, Mileage: 2,351, V8, Stock #U19060R, Was \$32,999 NOW \$26,500*	 2018 TOYOTA TACOMA 4X2 Midnight Black Metallic, 4-cyl. Est. Mileage: 16,047, Stock #SP20R0007 NOW \$26,799*	 SOLD 2018 TOYOTA PRE-RUNNER Magnetic Gray Metallic, 4-cyl. Est. Mileage: 14,461, Stock #SP20R0006 NOW \$26,999*	 2017 TOYOTA TACOMA 4X2 4-cyl., Super White, Est. Mileage: 15,844 Stock #R20002F NOW \$27,999*
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*On approved credit. Conditions apply. See dealer for details. Fees not included. Mileage may vary.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-20-012

SR-2 SEWER LIFT STATION REHABILITATION

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of construction of a new sewer lift station to replace the existing SR-2 sewer lift station; installation of new gravity sewer mains, manhole, force main from the new lift station to the nearest existing sewer force main, retaining wall, guard rail, installation of Owner-Furnished Contractor-Installed (OFCI) submersible duplex pump and controller; construction of a new generator building and appurtenances; demolition of the entire existing generator buildings, accessories, appurtenances and existing minor structures. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the sewer system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **270 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **February 20, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-20-012, SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) March 10, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 24, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water & Wastewater Engineer via email address nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-20-014

LEASE OF OFFICE AND OPERATIONS SUPPORT FACILITY FOR CUC ROTA ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the lease of a suitable office and operations support facility for the Headquarters of CUC's Administration and Operations on the island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA), DPW, OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The IFB package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration with CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package will be emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. Prospective Proposers for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division to be considered. For registration inquiries, please email Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-20-014, Lease of Office and Operations support facility for CUC Rota Administration and Operation."* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 23, 2020** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 7, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to William Gilmore, CUC Deputy Director via email address william.gilmore@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Thief rifles through car in CK

On Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020, at about 7:54pm, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a 911 call reporting a theft incident in the village of Chalan Kanoa.

The caller told the officers who were dispatched to the scene that they were about to go to the laundry when they noticed that the driver side door of their car was slightly ajar. When they went to check on

their vehicle, they noticed scattered items throughout the vehicle with their compartments all opened.

After a quick inventory of the vehicle, items reported missing include a brown wallet, two separate check stubs, a Bank of Guam debit card, and a store discount card.

Police conducted a perimeter sweep and recovered gas cards, the victims' I.D cards,

along with other small value care products.

If you or someone you know have any information about this crime and want to report it, call 911. If you would like to remain anonymous, call the CNMI Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. **(PR)**



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

DMS sets PTSA meeting

Dandan Middle School will have a Parents Teachers Students Association meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 6pm in the school's cafeteria. **(PR)**

500 Sails offers free swim classes to women in February and March

In partnership with Commonwealth Women's Association, 500 Sails is offering free swim classes for women and girls 12 and older

through the Sirena Project. Below are the newly announced March dates, including two Fridays, Saturdays this February and March 2020, plus on March 20 and March 27. All classes are from 10am to 11am at Guma Sakman; all levels welcome. Bring a water bottle, swim clothes, a towel, and a friend.

For more information: email info@500sails.org, visit website at www.500sails.org, follow www.facebook.com/500sails. **(PR)**



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM DR-4235, 4396, 4404-MP PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 • Telephone: (670) 664-2374 • Facsimile: (670) 664-2408

INVITATION FOR BIDS ITB20-GOV-057

FEMA DR-4235-MP 404 HMGP Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 – As-Matusi, Saipan

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Arnold I. Palacios, through the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), (collectively, "Commonwealth") and on behalf of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) are soliciting sealed bids for the supply, construction and implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project located at Site 5 in As-Matusi, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available and may be obtained at Pacific Quick Print & Post, in Garapan, Saipan beginning **February 11, 2020 for \$75.00** (non-refundable), payable to Pacific Quick Print & Post. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001 and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30.3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:00 am ChST** at the Governor's Conference in Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Leona DeLeon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Wednesday, March 4, 2020**. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-057 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 in As-Matusi, Saipan**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 18, 2020** and mailed to the **Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. BOX 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950** and the bid documents must be received no later than **March 27, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 30, 2020**. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 18, 2020**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

- Cash
- US Government Securities
- Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is 180 Calendar Days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be \$500.00/day.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

(To be part of Solicitation for quotes, ITBs and RFPs)

• **Gratuities.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).

• **Kickbacks.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).

• **Contingent Fees.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Agnon, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement & Supply

PIC Duck Race

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



The toys ducks are readied to be released along the Lazy River of Pacific Islands Club Saipan for the PIC Duck Race last Feb. 22. A total of 2,500 plastic ducks raced on the Lazy River of PIC, yet only four ducks made it to the finish line and won a prize. The fundraising activity raised about \$12,500 for the Commonwealth Cancer Association.



The toy ducks in the 12th annual Pacific Islanders Club Saipan's Duck Race make a full circuit of the Lazy River at PIC last Feb. 22.




Guests enjoy the Pacific Islanders Club Saipan's Duck Race in the Lazy River at PIC last Feb. 22.



Guests cheer on the ducks as they race to the finish line at the 12th annual Pacific Islanders Club Saipan's Duck Race in the Lazy River at PIC last Feb. 22.



Pacific Islanders Club Saipan's Clubmates secure the toy ducks before releasing them for the PIC Duck Race in the Lazy River at PIC last Saturday. The concept is that members of the public sponsor a plastic duck for \$5 each and the toys are then released on PIC's Lazy River, and the first one to cross the finish line after making one full circuit of the river wins.



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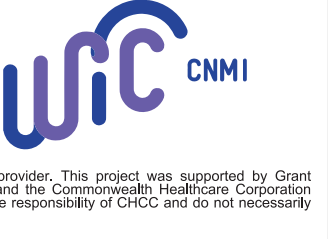
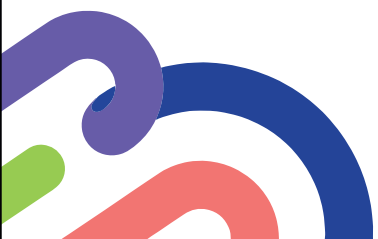
When: February 25, 26 & 27, 2020 (Tue - Thur)

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(Closed for Lunch 12pm - 1pm)

Where: Tanapag Youth Center

Call: (670) 285-4069

WIC provides healthy food, nutrition education, and breastfeeding guidance to more than 3,000 moms and children in the CNMI. If you are pregnant, a caregiver, or a mom with children under 5, you can get the right personalized support for you and your family.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This project was supported by Grant 7NM700NM5 CFDA 10.557 from USDA and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The contents above are solely the responsibility of CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of USDA.



Saturday, March 14, 2020

American Memorial Park

Micro Beach, Saipan, The Marianas

Full Marathon | Half Marathon | 10K | 5K



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	FULL	HALF	10K	5K
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2 nd	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$200
3 rd	\$500	\$300	\$300	\$100

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US/CNMI Residents <https://www.webscorer.com/register?raceid=197420>

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The Boy Scouts must use bankruptcy to a moral purpose, not just financial

The declaration landed with a thud. The 110-year-old Irving, Texas-based institution we know as the Boy Scouts of America declared bankruptcy this week in what is a very messy fight over sexual abuse claims going back decades.

The details here are complex and even arcane. As The Wall Street Journal has reported, there are some 275 pending lawsuits over sexual abuse and another 1,400 more claims waiting in the wings. Most of these—an estimated 90%—are eligible to come forward because several states have revised the statute of limitations to allow claimants to sue over abuse decades in the past. But the top-line out of this legal morass is clear and even simple, if also hard to do: The Boy Scouts of America needs to lead in showing how a venerated organization can do right by victims as it works to restore its ability to serve as an important cultural institution.

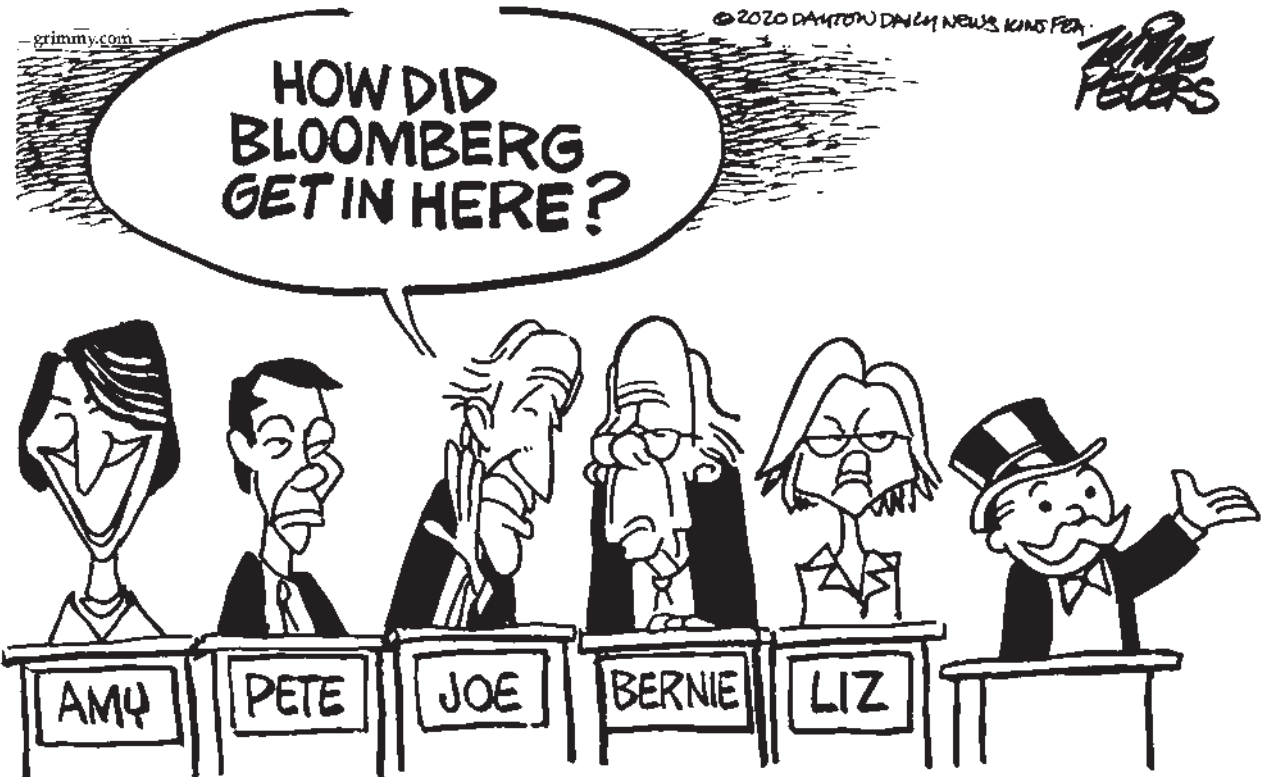
And it should be clear that for millions of Americans, the Boy Scouts has been an important cultural institution for decades. The Scouts have long taught leadership, self-reliance, resiliency, creativity and teamwork and all in service to a larger purpose. The Scouts taught public service and civic engagement to generations.

But the Scouts have also been wounded in a culture war and held fast to indefensible positions for far too long in terms of allowing for gay or and transgender scouts. The organization has since reversed its position to allow these Americans to serve in its ranks and have also pulled girls into the organization in ways that should serve them, as well as the institution.

Now the organization has to account for decades of denials and obfuscation in terms of sexual abuse. The facts show that there were young Americans who joined the Scouts to learn how to live with honor and courage but who were instead shown dishonor, abuse and cowardice. Doing right by these victims to the extent possible is the only thing the organization can do to show that, as an institution, it will live by the ideals it always needed to serve.

It is possible to do that through the bankruptcy process that will now organize claims in federal court where assets and allegations can be sorted out legally and fairly and a compensation fund can be created. But rather than a purely legal process the Boy Scouts need to demonstrate an understanding that this is about more than money and protecting assets. Transparency fosters integrity, compensation signals acknowledgment of culpability, and accepting fault where appropriate are crucial components of leadership. And we should all hope that the Boy Scouts of America can be that social institution that fosters leadership and service that we've always needed it to be.

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We need to support our local newspapers, really

In the context of coronavirus, impeachment, caucuses, primaries and spring training, the bankruptcy of McClatchy, America's second-largest newspaper chain, could not be expected to garner much attention. But such matters are of importance nonetheless.

McClatchy is the publisher of the Miami Herald, the Charlotte Observer, the Kansas City Star and other newspapers across the nation. The origins of the newspaper company date back to 1857 with the start of a four-page paper in Sacramento, Calif., that eventually became The Sacramento Bee. McClatchy continues to operate in bankruptcy, but financial challenges will persist.

That's because, as is well-known (or at least one would have thought so), the traditional newspaper business is struggling. According to the Pew Research Center for Journalism and Media, estimated total U.S. daily newspaper circulation, including both print and digital, "in 2018 was 28.6 million for weekday and 30.8 million for Sunday, down 8% and 9%, respectively, from the previous year."

Last year, New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet bleakly predicted that "most local newspapers are going to die in the next five years." That would merely represent an extension of what has already been occurring.

According to a recent report from PEN America, nearly 20% of all U.S. newspapers have closed since 2004 and the industry lost 47% of its jobs. At least 225 counties nationwide lack a local newspaper and half of all U.S. counties, which translates in more than 1,500 counties, have just one, typically a weekly, according to a recent story in the Washington Post, quoting data from Penny Abernathy, the Knight chair of journalism and digital media economics at the University of North Carolina.

Among the nation's remaining 7,200 newspapers, at least 1,000 are deemed to be ghost papers, meaning they have become so damaged by cutbacks that they produce little original reporting, according to PEN.

In response, one might suggest that this is merely the market speaking. And why would an economist argue against the workings of a free market? Because I believe this to be market failure.

At the heart of what is transforming the newspaper industry has, of course, been the internet. We receive our information in novel ways these days, and so newspapers are not as relevant. This is, it would appear, the logic of the market. But it is illogic. Here's why. By 2015, Google and Facebook comprised about

By ANIRBAN BASU
The Baltimore Sun

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CEO Sage Policy Group, Inc.



75% of new digital advertising dollars in America, according to a recent story in the Financial Times. The issue is that while these platforms represent sources of information, they are not news organizations, and certainly not local ones. The proverbial financial rug has been pulled out from under local newspapers, and that puts all of us at risk.

You might ask why if local newspapers are so valuable that they can't charge enough to make the numbers work. Indeed, there are apparently many people who think that newspapers are doing just fine. Seventy-one percent of U.S. adults believe that their local news outlets are financially sound, according to a 2018 Pew survey. But if you drill down further, just 14% have paid for a local news source. These are mutually incompatible views held simultaneously.

The reason newspapers can't charge enough is because: there is dishonesty, with many people free-riding on the subscriptions of others; newspapers have to compete with effectively free sources of information, including the nightly local news. Not enough of us are consistently interested in in-depth understanding of the daily workings of our communities.

But we should be, and when there is good reporting, we pour en masse onto the newspaper's website to read a free article made available to us on such a basis in order to lure us potentially into actually purchasing a subscription. That's where the market failure comes in—collectively, we don't pay enough for the value we derive.

We need local reporting because we need vetted information to help us improve our communities. This is not to say that we agree with everything written in these publications; quite the opposite. But we are faced with a loss of these types of publications given the present trajectory of such things and that is not a loss we can afford—not now, probably not ever.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

3 reasons why real-estate deals fail

Many real-estate deals are discussed. But few reach the finish line. That's because each deal involves a series of hurdles, any one of which can upend an otherwise promising deal. Below are a few common scenarios that either derail a deal before it's signed or blow it up after the ink has dried.

Not adapting to changing market conditions

The tide rises and falls. The economy heats up and cools down. And the real-estate market ebbs and flows. A few years ago, for example, the real-estate market was blazing. Now it's lukewarm, thanks to a series of short-term challenges, the most recent being the coronavirus cratering tourist travel from China. When demand is high, prices soar. When demand is low, prices plummet.

Because of these vicissitudes, sellers who don't reduce their price when the market cools will have trouble selling their property. And buyers who don't open up their wallets during hot markets will struggle to get any new properties.

On Saipan, the issue plays out more commonly on the seller's side. Some sellers act as if the market is always booming. And they price their property according to sunny rumors of improbable prices received by others. Or they follow a neighbor's unrealistic asking price even though the neighbor will likely never sell at anywhere near that price.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with trying to get top dollar. In fact, that should be the goal. But if the number is too disconnected from the market, sellers may have to wait years or decades to find that rare buyer willing to overpay. For many sellers though, the point is to convert their land into cash now, not years or decades later. These people need to price their land according to the current market, not rumors.

Letting emotions run the negotiation

When we buy land, it's a commodity. We look at the cost. We analyze the benefit. And then we calculate a price. When we sell land, it's a brand. We think about our memories and how it makes us feel. And then we set a price.

The divide is significant. Buyers act like consumers wander-

ing the aisles of Walmart seeking the best value. Sellers think like shoppers strolling through a Louis Vuitton store expecting to pay a premium for the emotion and experience of owning an LV bag.

As a result, buyers and sellers view transactions from different vantage points. Buyers want to pay based on impersonal factors like location and how much rental income a property can generate. Sellers, meanwhile, want a premium for the emotion and memories they've associated with the land.

How this disconnect plays out depends on the market. In a seller's market, sellers can move their property at a premium because demand is high. In a buyer's market though, sellers will struggle to sell because demand is low.

Failing to disclose material facts

We've just covered two common causes for why parties fail to agree on a price. Now let's talk about a frequent factor for deals that implode after the contract has been signed—failure to disclose material facts.

As a general rule, sellers need to disclose important information about their property to a buyer—even if the buyer doesn't ask. Unlike the military's old don't-ask-don't-tell policy, sellers need to err on the side of disclosure. The failure to do so breeds disputes and opens sellers up to charges of fraud.

What kind of things must you affirmatively disclose? Anything material, which is legal speak for any facts that would have a noticeable effect on the sales price if both sides knew about it.

Let's look at three examples.

Example 1: You are selling a house with plumbing issues that would not turn up during a casual inspection. Do you need to disclose it? Yes. Plumbing is important. And it would be hard for the buyer to uncover the problem until after they bought the house.

Example 2: You are selling empty land, and the road leading to your property runs over someone else's land. Do you need to disclose it? Yes. Getting to and from a piece of property without trespassing on someone else's land is one of the fundamental rights that a buyer is acquiring.

These kind of access issues pop up frequently with family lots where the family allows each other access over each other's

FINE PRINT

By **JORDAN SUNDELL**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business, real-estate, estate-planning, and asset-protection law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including JZ Group. His columns—focused mainly on real estate, small business, and estate planning—are published every other Tuesday. Be sure to like the Fine Print on Facebook!

land. But once an outsider owns a piece of the family land, they may not get the same deal.

Example 3: You own an apartment building, and the key tenant is late on payments or threatening to leave. Do you need to disclose it? Yes. Rental income from that tenant is an essential factor in the sales price. So, if there's a chance that the rental income will dry up, it would reduce the sales price.

Want to learn more?

Real-estate transactions can be complicated. There's a lot to know. And plenty riding on getting it right. But, fortunately, if you want to improve your chances of being in the group who gets it right, you're in luck. I, and several other speakers, will discuss some of what you need to know during a free informational seminar this Saturday, Feb. 29, from 9am to 11am at the Joeten Kiyu Public Library. It will cover common real-estate issues in addition to probate and estate planning. Come check it out.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

China's government is like something out of '1984'

The Chinese communist government increasingly poses an existential threat not just to its own 1.4 billion citizens but to the world at large.

China is currently in a dangerously chaotic state. And why not, when a premodern authoritarian society leaps wildly into the brave new world of high-tech science in a single generation?

The Chinese technological revolution is overseen by an Orwellian dictatorship. Predictably, the Chinese Communist Party has not developed the social, political or cultural infrastructure to ensure that its sophisticated industrial and biological research does not go rogue and become destructive to itself and to the billions of people who are on the importing end of Chinese products and protocols.

Central party officials run the government, military, media and universities collectively in a manner reminiscent of the science-fiction Borg organism of "Star Trek," which was a horde of robot-like entities all under the control of a central mind.

Thirty years ago, American pundits began gushing over China's sudden leap from horse-drawn power to solar, wind and nuclear energy. The Chinese communist government wowed Westerners. It created from nothing high-speed rail, solar farms, shiny new airports and gleaming new high-density apartment buildings.

Western-trained Chinese scientists soon were conducting sophisticated medical and scientific research. And they often did so rapidly, without the prying regulators, nosy elected officials and bothersome citizen lawsuits that often burden American and European scientists.

To make China instantly rich and modern, the communist hierarchy—the same government that once caused the deaths of some 60 million innocents under Mao Zedong—ignored property rights. It crushed individual freedom. It embraced secrecy

and bulldozed over any who stood in its way.

In much the same manner that silly American pundits once praised Benito Mussolini's fascist efforts to modernize Depression-era Italy, many naifs in the West praised China only because they wished that their own countries could recalibrate so quickly and efficiently—especially in service to green agendas.

But the world is learning that China does not just move mountains for new dams or bulldoze ancient neighborhoods that stand in the path of high-speed rail. It also hid the outbreak and the mysterious origins of the deadly coronavirus from its own people and the rest of the planet as well—a more dangerous replay of its earlier effort to mask the spread of the SARS virus. The result was that thousands of unknowing carriers spread the viral plague while the government covered up its epidemic proportions.

China, of course, does not wish to have either its products or citizens quarantined from other countries. But the Chinese government will not allow foreign scientists to enter its country to collaborate on containing the coronavirus and developing a vaccine.

No wonder internet conspiracies speculate that the virus was either a rogue product of the Chinese military's bioengineering weapons lab or originated from bats, snakes or pangolins and the open-air markets where they are sold as food.

It is hard to believe that in 2020, the world's largest and second-wealthiest country, which boasts of high-tech consumer products and gleaming cities, has imprisoned in "reeducation camps" more than 1 million Uighur Muslims in the manner that Hitler, Stalin and Mao once relocated "undesirable" populations.

China seems confident that it will soon rule the world, given its huge population, massive trade surpluses, vast cash reserves and industries that produce so many of the world's electronic devices, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods.

By **VICTOR DAVIS HANSON**

Tribune News Service



Victor Davis Hanson is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and the author of The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won, from Basic Books. You can reach him by emailing authorvdh@gmail.com.

For a year, the Chinese government has battled massive street demonstrations for democracy in Hong Kong. Beijing cynically assumes that Western nations don't care. They are expected to drop their characteristic human rights advocacy because of how profitable their investments inside China have proven.






Beijing was right. Few Western companies complain that Chinese society is surveilled, regulated and controlled in a nightmarish fashion that George Orwell once predicted in his dystopian novel "1984."

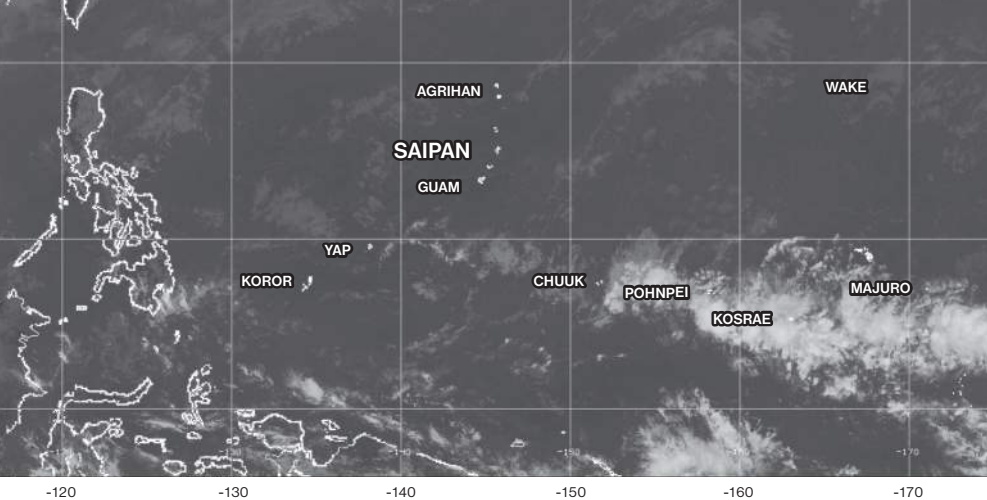
All of these recent scandals should remind the world that China got rich by warping trade and stealing technology in much the same way that it deals with epidemics and dissidents. That is, by simply ignoring legitimate criticism and crushing anyone in its way.

If the Chinese communist Borg is willing to put millions of its own citizens at risk of infection and death, why would it care about foreigners' complaints that China is getting rich and powerful by breaking international trade rules?

The truth about President Trump's decision to call China to account over its systematic abuse of international trade norms is not that Trump's policy is reckless or ill-considered. It's that at this late date, the reckoning might prove too little, too late.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers		Partly cloudy with isolated showers		Partly cloudy with isolated showers	
86°	75°	86°	75°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:44 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A series of high pressure centers will pass by to the north of the local area and will produce breezy trade-winds across the Marianas through Tuesday. Expect winds of 20 to 25 mph today decreasing a little by night but there still will be enough wind gusts Tuesday to keep things breezy. Winds will decrease the second half of the week but increase again the coming weekend as high pressure again builds across the Northwest Pacific. The relatively dry weather pattern will persist across the Marianas with only isolated showers expected through the forecast. A weak shear line will cause mostly cloudy skies tonight through Tuesday night. The earlier forecast had clouds increasing today, but model and satellite imagery hint that skies will remain partly cloudy.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Showers	84° / 75°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°	
Yap	Showers	86° / 80°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Kosrae	Windy	86° / 80°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	75° / 66°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	48° / 28°	
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 66°	
Honolulu	Sunny	80° / 70°	
London	Showers	48° / 36°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 54°	
Manila	Mostly Sunny	90° / 73°	
Melbourne	Showers	63° / 48°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	81° / 74°	
New York	Showers	50° / 44°	
Osaka	Showers	57° / 50°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	59° / 46°	
Busan	Showers	55° / 43°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	64° / 46°	
Salem	Cloudy	70° / 49°	
San Francisco	Sunny	61° / 48°	
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	52° / 32°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	52° / 39°	
Washington, DC	Showers	53° / 47°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:54 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.09	
9:23 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.65	
3:20 PM	LOW TIDE	0.73	
8:34 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.65	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Thursday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	7:38 AM	7:42 PM	-
Wednesday	8:14 AM	8:28 PM	-
Thursday	8:50 AM	9:14 PM	-
Friday	9:25 AM	10:00 PM	-
Saturday	10:02 AM	10:48 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily				
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
				2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

China's Xi says epidemic 'grim,' calls for action on economy

BEIJING (AP)—Warning that China's virus epidemic is "still grim and complex," President Xi Jinping called Sunday for more efforts to stop the outbreak, revive industry and prevent the disease from disrupting spring planting of crops.

Xi defended the ruling Communist Party's response as "timely and effective" in a video conference with officials in charge of anti-disease work, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Xi sounded a note of caution in the face of hopes abroad that the disease that has killed more than 2,400 people since December might be under control. He said the situation is at a "critical stage" and called on officials to "resolutely curb the spread of the epidemic."

"The current epidemic situation is still grim and complex," Xinhua cited Xi as saying. "Prevention and control

are at the most critical stage."

The ruling party is trying to strike a difficult balance between stopping the virus and reviving China's vast manufacturing and other industries. Most of the world's second-largest economy has been shut down since late January in the most sweeping anti-disease measures ever imposed and are only gradually reopening.

Forecasters say China might rebound quickly if the outbreak can be controlled by the end of March. But they say this quarter's economic output will shrink by as much as 1% from the quarter ending in December after Beijing extended the Lunar New Year holiday to keep factories and offices closed and told the public to avoid traveling.

Concern is growing that the disease might be spreading in South Korea and other countries, instead of only affecting

people who visited China and others who had close contact with them.

Xi said the epidemic is a health emergency with the "fastest spread" and "most difficult prevention and control" in China since the Communist Party came to power in 1949, according to Xinhua.

"For us, this is a crisis and a big test," Xi was cited as saying.

The report made no mention of criticism from members of the public that officials delayed taking action against the disease and might be concealing details its impact, but Xi was cited as saying "all work arrangements are timely" and anti-disease

measures are effective.

The meeting included officials of the Cabinet and the group headed by Premier Li Keqiang, China's No. 2 leader, that was formed to oversee anti-disease efforts, according to Xinhua. It said officials from Hubei, the central province where the outbreak began, also participated.

Invoking the martial theme the ruling party has given the anti-disease campaign, Xi called on them to "deploy medical forces" to "cut off the source of infection," especially in the capital, Beijing. At the same time, he said they must help factories and other

companies reopen and make sure low-income workers are employed.

The president said "low-risk areas" in China should adjust disease-control measures to "fully restore production" while higher-risk areas keep their focus on epidemic prevention.

The government previously promised tax breaks, subsidies and other aid to entrepreneurs and farmers to cushion the blow of the most sweeping anti-disease controls ever imposed.

Forecasters say it will be at least mid-March before manufacturing and other industries return to normal after the government cut off most access to

Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak, imposed travel controls nationwide and closed factories, restaurants, shopping malls and other businesses. That disrupted the flow of supplies to farmers and factories.

Xi mentioned possible use of monetary policy and more cuts in taxes and fees to support job creation but announced no specific initiatives.

"We must promptly solve the outstanding problems that affect spring plowing and organize production, circulation and supply of materials to ensure production does not miss the farming time," Xi was cited as saying.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Spain closes airports on Canary Islands due to sand storm

MADRID (AP)—Spanish authorities said Sunday that they have closed airports on the Canary Islands because of a wind storm that is blinding the archipelago with sand and dust. Spain's airport authorities said that incoming planes have been rerouted to other destinations and no flights are being allowed to leave airports on the islands' airports. The regional government for the Canary Islands says that wind gusts could reach 120 kph (around 75 mph). Authorities have closed schools for Monday. Television images show palm trees whipping in the wind amid a thick yellow haze enveloping the islands. The storm phenomenon, locally known as "calima," is capable of lifting up clouds of sand and dust from the Sahara desert and transporting them across the 95 kilometers (59 miles) separating the islands from the African coast.

US gas prices steady at \$2.53 per gallon over past 2 weeks

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline remained steady at \$2.53 per gallon over the past two weeks. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey said Sunday that the price at the pump averages 9 cents higher than it was a year ago. The highest

average price in the nation for regular-grade gas is \$3.54 per gallon in San Diego. The lowest average is \$2.06 in Jackson, Mississippi. The average price of diesel is \$2.98, down three cents.

Egypt upholds sentence of top customs official on corruption

CAIRO (AP)—Egypt's top appeals court on Sunday upheld a 10-year jail term for the head of the country's customs authority who was convicted of corruption. Egypt's highest anti-graft agency, the Administrative Control Authority, arrested Abdel-Azim in June 2018, while taking bribes from an unnamed businessman. Abdel-Azim is one of a few senior government officials detained over corruption allegations in recent years. Abdel-Azim was referred to trial and the criminal court in the Mediterranean province of Port Said in April last year, where he was sentenced him to 10 years in prison after his conviction for profiteering and squandering public funds. The court also fined him more 750,000 Egyptian pounds (more than \$48,000). Abdel-Azim then appealed his case before the Court of Cassation which upheld the verdict on Sunday. Authorities also arrested the governor of the Nile Delta province of Menoufia in 2018. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison for accepting bribes to award public works contracts.



AP
In this Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, photo, a woman using a trolley bag to collect foods distributed by volunteers outside her home in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.

FDA approves drug that lowers cholesterol in a new way

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—U.S. regulators on Friday approved a new type of cholesterol-lowering drug aimed at millions of people who can't tolerate — or don't get enough help from — widely used statin pills like Lipitor and Crestor.

The Food and Drug Administration approved Esperion Therapeutics Inc.'s Nexletol for people genetically predisposed to have sky-high cholesterol and people who have heart disease and need to further lower their bad cholesterol. The daily pill is to be taken in conjunction with a healthy diet and the highest statin dose patients can handle, the FDA said.

High LDL, or bad cholesterol, is one of the top risks for heart attacks and other problems. Studies showed that Nexletol could lower LDL by about 25% when taken alone and by an additional 18%

when combined with a statin.

"This is a nice alternative" to statins, but those medicines will still be the first choice, said Dr. Christie Ballantyne, Baylor College of Medicine's cardiology chief. He consults for Esperion and helped test the drug.

Millions of people take cheap, generic statins, but the medicines don't lower LDL cholesterol enough for many patients and others experience side effects such as muscle pain. Other options include Zetia pills, also sold in generic form as ezetimibe for about \$13 to \$50 a month.

Far fewer patients use Repatha and Praluent, newer drugs that cost \$6,000 or more a year. Insurers often restrict coverage of those medicines, which are shots patients give themselves once or twice a month.

Esperion, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, did not im-

mediately disclose the drug's list price but previously said it planned a price of about \$300 per month. Nexletol, also known as bempedoic acid, should be available in late March, the company said.

It works in the liver by blocking an enzyme needed to make LDL. Statins also block cholesterol production in the liver, but in a different way, so the drugs together can reduce LDL more.

The new drug "would be valuable to add to treatment" for patients who can't get their LDL down enough with existing drugs or can't afford the injected ones, Duke Heart Center co-director Dr. Manesh Patel said. Patel, who was not involved in the research, estimated 10% to 15% of his patients might be eligible for Nexletol.

In company-funded studies, common Nexletol side effects

included high blood pressure and muscle and joint pain. Serious side effects include tendon rupture. Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding should not take Nexletol because of possible harm to the baby, the FDA said.

In one study of more than 2,200 patients, there were several more deaths from heart problems in the Nexletol group than among those given placebo pills. Patel said that's likely just a random imbalance, not a big concern.

The company has a large study underway to see whether Nexletol can lower the risk of heart attacks and other problems, not just cholesterol. Results are expected late in 2022. The company estimates Nexletol could be appropriate for up to 18 million Americans and more than 100 million people in other countries.

Nation

Moderates hustle to blunt Sanders' momentum after Nevada win

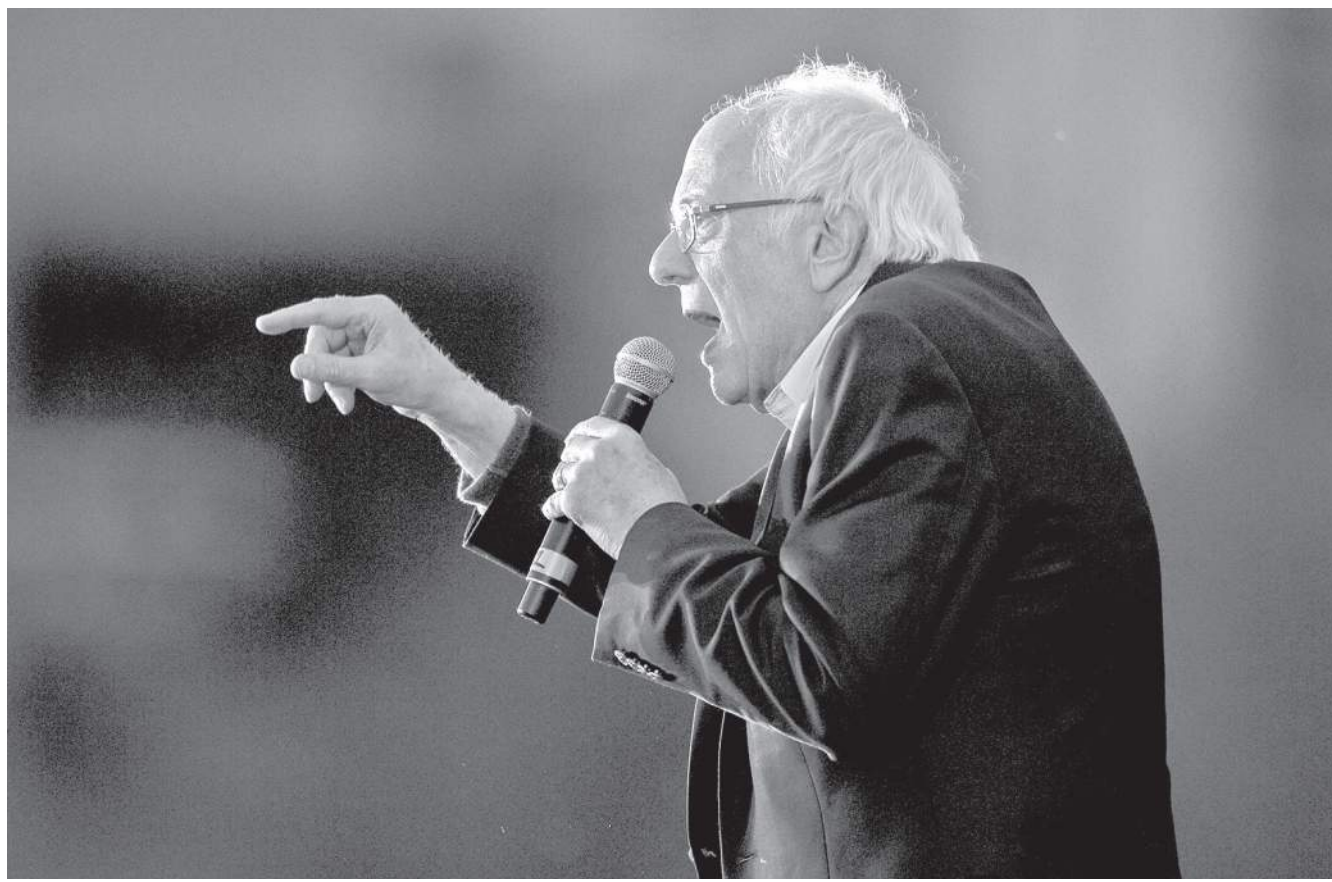
CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—Bernie Sanders' commanding Nevada caucus victory made him a top target for his Democratic rivals and a growing source of anxiety for establishment Democrats worried that the nomination of an avowed democratic socialist could cost the party in November.

The win solidified Sanders' front-runner status as the race turned to Saturday's presidential primary in South Carolina. The Vermont senator was trounced in the state by more than 40 percentage points in 2016, but he is hoping that his success in diverse Nevada will prove to black voters in South Carolina that his campaign has broad appeal.

Any momentum that Sanders gains in South Carolina could be devastating to former Vice President Joe Biden, who is looking to the state for a commanding victory that can keep his candidacy alive through Super Tuesday. The March 3 contests will unfold in 14 states and award one-third of the delegates needed for the Democratic nomination.

With time running short, moderate Democrats grew increasingly nervous Sunday that Sanders' call for a political "revolution" would drive voters away from the party, both in the matchup against President Donald Trump and in House and Senate races.

"I think it would be a real burden for us in these states



AP
Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., speaks during a campaign event on Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020, in Austin, Texas.

or congressional districts that we have to do well in," South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn, the House majority whip and the top-ranking black Democrat in Congress, said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

Prominent Democrats expect Clyburn will endorse Biden this week. The congressman said he'll back a candidate on Wednesday—after the next Democratic debate—and pointed to the impact a Sanders nomination would have on House districts Democrats flipped to take control of the House in 2018.

"In those districts, it's going to be tough to hold on to these jobs if you have to make the case for accepting a self-proclaimed democratic socialist," he said.

Sanders' campaign argued he will bring in new and infrequent voters — largely progressives, young people and voters of color — who have been alienated from the process and seek a drastic overhaul of Washington, not merely trying to oust Trump.

He successfully relied on that coalition Saturday to dominate his Democratic rivals in

Nevada, pulling far ahead of Biden, the second-place finisher, and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, who came in third. Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren landed in fourth, while Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and California billionaire

Tom Steyer were in a close race for fifth as the Nevada Democratic Party continued to tabulate results.

Sanders celebrated the win in Texas, a top Super Tuesday prize and a state that Democrats see trending their way thanks to a growing Hispanic

population and opposition to Trump in the suburbs.

Sounding like a candidate who had already secured the nomination, Sanders told thousands of cheering supporters who filled a basketball arena on the campus of the University of Houston that he would win in the state both next month and next fall.

"If working people and young people of this city, black and white and Latino, gay or straight, if our people stand together, come out to vote, we're going to win here in Texas," he said.

Sanders was announcing a plan to provide universal, government-funded child care until age 3 and universal pre-kindergarten programs after that. In an interview with "60 Minutes" that aired Sunday night, he said he'd pay for it using part of the proceeds from his previously announced wealth tax, which would be levied annually on fortunes worth more than \$32 million.

Report finds Catholic charity founder sexually abused women

PARIS (AP)—A respected Catholic figure who worked to improve conditions for the developmentally disabled for more than half a century sexually abused at least six women during most of that period, according to a report released Saturday by the France-based charity he founded.

The report produced for L'Arche International said the women's descriptions provided enough evidence to show that Jean Vanier engaged in "manipulative sexual relationships" from 1970 to 2005, usually with a "psychological hold" over the alleged victims.

Although he was a layman and not a priest, many Catholics hailed Vanier, who was Canadian, as a living saint for his work with the disabled. He died last year at age 90.

"The alleged victims felt deprived of their free will and so the sexual activity was coerced or took place under coercive conditions," the report, commissioned by

L'Arche last year and prepared by the U.K.-based GCPs Consulting group, said. It did not rule out potential other victims.

None of the women was disabled, a significant point given the Catholic hierarchy has long sought to portray any sexual relationship between religious leaders and other adults as consensual unless there was clear evidence of disability.

The #MeToo and #ChurchToo movements, however, have forced a recognition that power imbalances such as those in spiritual relationships can breed abuse.

During the charity-commissioned inquiry, six adult women without links to each other said Vanier engaged in sexual relations with them as they were seeking spiritual direction.

The women reported similar facts, and Vanier's sexual misconduct was often associated with alleged "spiritual and mystical justifications,"

the report states.

A statement released by L'Arche France Saturday stressed that some women still have "deep wounds."

The report noted similarities with the pattern of abuse of the Rev. Thomas Philippe, a Catholic priest Vanier called his "spiritual father." Philippe, who died in 1993, has been accused of sexual abuse by several women.

A statement from L'Arche International said analysis of archives shows that Vanier "adopted some of Father Thomas Philippe's deviant theories and practices." Philippe was banned from exercising any public or private ministry in a trial led by the Catholic Church in 1956 for his theories and the sexual practices that stemmed from them.

In a letter to the charity members, the Leaders of L'Arche International, Stephan Posner and Stacy Cates Carney, told of their shock at the news, and condemned Vanier's actions.

ACROSS THE NATION

Skeptic of world being round dies in California rocket crash

BARSTOW, Calif. (AP)—A California man who said he wanted to fly to the edge of outer space to see if the world is round has died after his home-built rocket blasted off into the desert sky and plunged back to earth. "Mad" Mike Hughes was killed on Saturday afternoon after his rocket crashed on private property near Barstow, California. Waldo Stakes, a colleague who was at the rocket launch, said Hughes, 64, was killed. The Science Channel said on Twitter it had been chronicling Hughes' journey and that "thoughts & prayers go out to his family & friends during this difficult time." "It was always his dream to do this launch," the Twitter message said. Hughes also was a limousine driver, who held the Guinness world record for "longest limousine ramp jump," for jumping 103 feet (31 meters) in a Lincoln Town Car stretch limousine, at a speedway in 2002. upward, then takes around 10 seconds to fall straight back to earth. Shrieks can be heard as the rocket plows into the desert.

Boys, 13, charged with murder in California library fire

PORTERVILLE, Calif. (AP)—Murder charges have been filed against two 13-year-old boys suspected of starting a blaze that killed two firefighters at a central California library. Police said the boys were arrested after they were seen running from Porterville City Library shortly after flames erupted on the afternoon of Feb. 18. The Tulare County District Attorney's Office on Friday filed two counts of murder with special circumstances of multiple murders and arson, the Visalia

Times Delta reported. The boys denied the charges and remain in jail, the newspaper said. Their names were not released because they are minors. They are scheduled to return to juvenile court on March 11. Firefighters Patrick Jones, 25, and Raymond Figueroa, 35, were killed as they battled the flames that gutted the library in the town about 50 miles (79 kilometers) north of Bakersfield in the San Joaquin Valley. The library was built in 1953 and did not have sprinklers, said Fire Capt. Joanne Bear.

Feds to investigate California bus rollover that killed 3

PALA MESA, Calif. (AP)—Federal investigators are sending a team to the scene of a charter bus crash that killed three people and injured 18 others on a rain-slicked highway near San Diego, officials said Sunday. The bus was on Interstate 15 in Pala Mesa on Saturday when it swerved, rolled down an embankment and landed on its roof, North County Fire Protection District spokesman John Choi said. Several passengers were thrown from the bus, and one of the dead was trapped under the vehicle, Choi said. Another person who died was trapped inside, he said. The National Transportation Safety Board said Sunday that it had dispatched a team of four to investigate the crash in Pala Mesa, an unincorporated community about 45 miles (72 kilometers) north of San Diego. "There was a pretty good rainstorm around the time of the crash," Choi said Sunday. It was too early to determine if the weather was a factor, officials said. The bus had no seat belts, according to Choi. The wounded were taken to three hospitals with varying injuries, Choi said.

Asia

Infections climb in South Korea as world fights virus

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea reported an eight-fold jump in viral infections Saturday with more than 400 cases mostly linked to a church and a hospital, while the death toll in Iran climbed to six and a dozen towns in Italy effectively went into lockdowns as health officials around the world battle a new virus that has spread from China.

Some virus clusters have shown no direct link to travel to China. The spread in Italy prompted local authorities in the Lombardy and Veneto regions to order schools, businesses, and restaurants closed and to cancel sporting events and Masses. Hundreds of residents and workers who came into contact with an estimated 79 people confirmed infected in Italy were in isolation pending test results. Two

people infected with the virus have died.

South Korea has reported 433 cases and its third death from the virus, a man in his 40s who was found dead at home and posthumously tested positive. There's concern that the country's death toll could grow. In and around South Korea's fourth-largest city, Daegu, health workers scrambled to screen thousands. Virus patients with signs of pneumonia or other serious conditions at the Cheongdo hospital were transferred to other facilities, 17 of them in critical condition, Vice Health Minister Kim Gang-lip told reporters.

He said that the outbreak had entered a serious new phase, but still expressed cautious optimism that it can be contained to the region surrounding Daegu, where



AP
Workers wearing protective gear arrive to spray disinfectant as a precaution against the coronavirus at a market in Seoul, South Korea, Monday, Feb. 24, 2020.

Indian authorities scramble to give Trump a mega-rally

AHMEDABAD, India (AP)—The sun-baked city of Ahmedabad was jostling with activity Sunday as workers cleaned roads, planted flowers and hoisted hundreds of billboards featuring President Donald Trump, a day ahead of his maiden two-day visit to India after Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised him a boisterous public reception.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the northwestern city are expected to greet Trump on Monday for a road show leading to a massive rally at what has been touted as the world's largest cricket stadium.

Trump's motorcade will travel amid cheers from a battery of carefully picked and vetted Modi loyalists and workers from his Bharatiya Janata Party who will stand for hours alongside the neatly manicured 22-kilometer (14-mile) stretch of road to accord Trump a grand welcome.

Tens of thousands of police officers will be on hand to keep security tight and a new wall has come up in front of a slum, apparently to hide it from passers-by.

Monday's event is the second act of growing bonhomie between Trump and Modi after they shared a stage last year in Houston at a rally called "Howdy, Modi!" that featured flashy Bollywood musical and dance numbers and was or-

ganized by a nonprofit group with Hindu nationalist links.

Modi's Hindu nationalist government is pulling out all the stops, at an expense of more than \$14 million, to woo the president and first lady Melania Trump. But experts have said that very little of substance will be achieved for either side beyond the pageantry and symbolism.

For Modi, however, the event could be a reprieve from opposition in the country against some of his recent policies, a slumping economy and ongoing protests over a new citizenship law that excludes Muslims.

Experts say a U.S.-India trade pact, which has been in the works from the last three years, seems off the table.

"They've been hitting us very hard for many, many years," Trump said this week, while quickly adding, "I really like Prime Minister Modi."

The slick extravaganza, to the annoyance of some locals, has not gone well for Modi's rivals, who have said Trump's visit will not benefit India but is aimed at boosting the American economy.

Jaiveer Shergill, a spokesman for the main opposition Congress party, said Saturday that relations between the two countries "should be weighed on scales of targets achieved" and need to remain beyond "hugs and handshakes."

the first case was reported on Tuesday.

Globally, nearly 78,000 people have been infected in 29 countries, and more than 2,300 have died.

A team of global experts with the World Health Organization is on the way to China's Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Saturday. It has been visiting other parts of China this week.

Tedros also told a meeting of African health ministers that the WHO is concerned about cases with "no clear epidemiological link, such as

travel history to China or contact with a confirmed case." He is especially concerned about the growing number of cases in Iran.

But Tedros said the top concern is the potential spread to countries with weaker health systems, including in Africa. The 20% of virus patients with severe or critical disease require intensive care equipment that is "in short supply in many African countries," he said. Just one case of the virus has been confirmed in Africa, in Egypt.

In some positive news, China said Saturday that the daily count of new virus cases

there fell significantly to 397, though another 109 people died of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus. Most of the new cases and all but three of the deaths were in Hubei province, where the outbreak started.

The new figures, along with an upward revision of Hubei's earlier count, brought the total number of cases in mainland China to 76,288, with 2,345 deaths. China has severely restricted travel and imposed strict quarantine measures to stop the virus from spreading.

A few Chinese provinces, eager to restart factories and

their economies, began easing those restrictions after reporting no new cases in recent days. Liaoning and Gansu provinces both lowered their emergency response level, and two cities in Shaanxi province resumed bus services and removed checkpoints at railway stations, bus stations and on some highways.

Of the 229 new cases in South Korea, 200 are from Daegu and nearby areas. By Saturday morning, the city of 2.5 million and surrounding areas counted 352 cases, including two fatalities in the Cheongdo hospital. Both patients had pneumonia.

Malaysia faces political tremor amid bid to form new govt

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia's alliance government under 94-year-old Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is threatening to unravel less than two years after a historic election victory ousting the coalition that had ruled the country since independence.

Startling political maneuvers have sparked expectation that Mahathir will pull his Bersatu party out of the four-member ruling alliance and team with his former foes to form a new government in a major political upheaval that could further polarize the multiracial nation.

The maneuvers would keep Mahathir in power and thwart his named successor Anwar Ibrahim from taking power, replaying their decades-old feud. They were Malaysia's top two leaders in Mahathir's first stint as premier but fell out politically

before reuniting in the political pact that ousted a corruption-tainted government in the May 2018 election.

Their relationship has been testy, with Mahathir refusing to set a date to relinquish power despite a preelection agreement to hand over power to Anwar.

Anwar confirmed late Sunday there were attempts by some Bersatu members and "traitors" from his party to form a new government. But he noted that the situation was still fluid.

His party deputy president and Economics Minister Azmin Ali, along with a number of lawmakers including Bersatu President and Home Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, huddled with opposition leaders Sunday at a hotel in a Kuala Lumpur suburb.

Ironically, the maneuvers would restore to power the

Malay party of disgraced former leader Najib Razak, who with several of his party leaders are standing trial for corruption. It would also propel to national power a fundamentalist Islamic party that rules two states and champions Islamic laws. The two Malay parties still have strong support from ethnic Malays, who account for 60 percent of Malaysia's 32 million people.

Azmin, Muhyiddin, along with leaders from Najib's party, the Islamist party and two other parties from Borneo island, reportedly met Sunday with Malaysia's king to seek his backing. Rumors of an announcement on the new government didn't pan out Sunday night but Anwar said it could materialize Monday.

At a prayer meeting at his house, Anwar told supporters he was "shocked" with the developments that he said was a

"betrayal" of the agreement in place on the power transition. But he was calm and called it a "small trial," saying he has overcome harder times. He even joked that while he may not be Malaysia's eighth prime minister, he could be the ninth.

Anwar and his wife Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, who is currently the country's deputy prime minister, are due to meet the king later Monday. Wan Azizah tweeted that "men can plan but Allah decides," urging supporters to believe God will side with those who are patient.

Mahathir has remained silent as many Malaysians reacted with dismay and shock on social media, saying moves to form a "backdoor" government would be unethical and that a new election should be called if the ruling alliance collapses.

World

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—One of every three people in Venezuela is struggling to put enough food on the table to meet minimum nutrition requirements as the nation's severe economic contraction and political upheaval persists, according to a study published Sunday by the U.N. World Food Program.

A nationwide survey based on data from 8,375 questionnaires reveals a startling picture of the large number of Venezuelans surviving off a diet consisting largely of tubers and beans as hyperinflation renders many salaries worthless.

A total of 9.3 million people — roughly one-third of the population — are moderately or severely food insecure, said the World Food Program's study, which was conducted at the invitation of the Venezuelan government. Food insecurity is defined as an individual being unable to meet basic dietary needs.

The study describes food insecurity as a nationwide concern, though certain states like Delta Amacuro, Amazonas and Falcon had especially high levels. Even in more prosperous regions, one in five people are estimated to be food insecure.

"The reality of this report shows the gravity of the social, economic and political crisis in our country," said Miguel Pizarro, a Venezuelan opposition leader.

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has been largely reluctant in recent years to

UN STUDY: 1 of every 3 Venezuelans is FACING HUNGER

By JORGE RUEDA and
CHRISTINE ARMARIO
Associated Press



In this Feb. 14, 2019 file photo, Dugleidi Salcedo complains to a neighbor about the high price of food as she prepares arepas for her three sons in her kitchen in the Petare slum, in Caracas, Venezuela.

invite international organizations to provide assessments of the nation's humanitarian ordeal, though the World Food Program said it was granted "full independence" and collected data throughout the country "without any impediment or obstruction."

"WFP looks forward to a continuation of its dialogue with the Venezuelan government and discussions that will focus on the way forward to provide assistance for those who are food insecure," the agency said in a statement.

There was no immediate response to the findings by Maduro's government.

The survey found that 74% of families have adopted

"food-related coping strategies," such as reducing the variety and quality of food they eat. Sixty percent of households reported cutting portion sizes in meals, 33% said they had accepted food as payment for work and 20% reported selling family assets to cover basic needs.

The issue appears to be one that is less about the availability of food and more about the difficulty in obtaining it. Seven in 10 reported that food could always be found but said it is difficult to purchase because of high prices. Thirty-seven percent reported they had lost their job or business as a result of Venezuela's severe economic contraction.

Venezuela has been in the throes of a political and humanitarian crisis that has led over 4.5 million people to flee in recent years. Maduro has managed to keep his grip on power despite a push by opposition leader Juan Guaidó to remove him from office and mounting U.S. sanctions.

Maduro frequently blames the Trump administration for his nation's woes, and his government has urged the International Criminal Court to open an investigation, alleging that the financial sanctions

are causing suffering and even death. The nation's struggles to feed citizens and provide adequate medical care predate U.S. sanctions on the Venezuelan government.

In addition to food, the survey also looked at interruptions in access to electricity and water, finding that four in 10 households experience daily power cuts. Four in 10 also reported recurrent interruptions in water service, further complicating daily life.

Nine dead in Turkey as 5.7 earthquake strikes western Iran

ANKARA, Turkey (AP)—Nine people were killed in eastern Turkey by a magnitude 5.7 earthquake early Sunday morning, Turkish Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said.

The quake centered just east across the border in neighboring Iran, west of the Iranian city of Khoy, and affected villages in the Turkish province of Van.

At least three of the dead were children, according to Turkish Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu. The health minister later said at least 37 people were injured, including nine in critical but not life-threatening condition.

Iran's official IRNA news agency said at least 75 people had been injured inside Iran, six of whom were hospitalized.

A second earthquake—also magnitude 5.7—struck Sunday evening in the same area in Iran, according to the country's seismology center.

It was not immediately clear if the second quake caused further damage or casualties in

either country.

The U.S. Geological Survey put the second earthquake's magnitude at 6.0. Varying magnitudes are common in the immediate aftermath.

Turkish broadcaster NTV showed images of locals and soldiers digging through the rubble of collapsed buildings on Sunday, as families sat in snowy streets fearing further tremors.

Emergency teams were sent to the remote mountainous region, which has a history of powerful earthquakes. Last month, a quake centered on the eastern Turkish city of Elazig killed more than 40 people. In 2011, more than 600 were killed when a quake struck north of Van province's capital.

According to the European Mediterranean Seismological Center, the first quake happened at 9:22 a.m. local time (0552 GMT) at a depth of 5 kilometers (3 miles). The EMSC reported several further quakes that measured up to magnitude 4.4.

Noting that the survey was done in July through September, Carolina Fernández, a Venezuelan rights advocate who works with vulnerable women, said she believes the situation has deteriorated even more. While it was once possible for many families to survive off remittances sent by relatives abroad, she said, that has become more difficult as much of the economy is dollarized and prices rise.

"Now it's not enough to have one person living abroad," she said.

Fernández said food insecurity is likely to have an enduring impact on a generation of young Venezuelans going hungry during formative years.

"We're talking about children who are going to have long-term problems because they're not eating adequately," she said.

Those who are going hungry include people like Yonni Gutiérrez, 56, who was standing outside a restaurant that sells roasted chickens in Caracas on Sunday.

The unemployed man approached the restaurant's front door whenever a customer left with a bag of food, hoping they might share something. He said he previously had been able to scrape by helping unload trucks at a market, but the business that employed him closed.

"Sometimes, with a little luck, I get something good," he said of his restaurant stakeout.

Iran's seismology center said the second quake hit the Zarabad district at 7:30 p.m. local time (1600 GMT) at a depth of 28 kilometers (17 miles).

The USGS said the first quake was at a depth of 6.4 kilometers (4 miles) and the second was at 10 kilometers (6 miles).

The effects of the quake hit four villages in Van. Seven of the fatalities occurred in Ozpinar village, where Soylu said search and rescue teams had arrived. He added that the quake caused 1,066 buildings to collapse while the Education Ministry said a number of schools were damaged.

Koca said 25 ambulances, a medical helicopter and 13 emergency teams had been sent to the region. The Disaster and Emergency Management Directorate (AFAD) said 144 tents for families had been dispatched.

IRNA said the first earthquake affected 43 villages in the mountainous Qotur area.

More Russian weapons for Serbia despite US sanction threats

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP)—Serbia has received a sophisticated anti-aircraft system from Russia, despite possible U.S. sanctions against the Balkan state, which is formally seeking European Union membership.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic told the pro-government TV Prva on Sunday that the Pantsir S1 air-defense system was purchased after suggestions from Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"Buy Pantsir, it showed its best efficiency in Syria," Vucic quoted Putin as saying during one of their recent, frequent meetings.

"This anti-aircraft system is very efficient for targeting drones which are becoming crucial in modern warfare," Vucic said.

Despite seeking to join the EU, Serbia under Vucic's pop-

ulist leadership has strengthened close political and military ties with its Slavic ally Russia.

Serbia has pledged to stay out of NATO and refused to join Western sanctions against Russia for its policies in Ukraine.

Russia's arming of Serbia is watched with unease in the West amid growing tensions in the Balkans which went through a devastating civil war in the 1990s. NATO intervened in Serbia to stop a bloody Serb crackdown against Kosovo Albanian separatists in 1999.

U.S. officials have openly spoken about introducing sanctions against Serbia in case Moscow sells more arms to the country, especially with weapons that could jeopardize the security of neighboring NATO-member states.

Vucic said he hoped there would be no sanctions because he has spoken openly about the Pantsir purchase. He said he believed the sanctions threat was focused on possible purchase of the S-400 anti-aircraft systems that have a much larger range and are more offensive weapons.

The delivery on Saturday of two of the purchased six Russian missile systems comes just days after Russia's defense minister, Sergei Shoigu, visited Belgrade where he declared that the military cooperation between the two states has reached a "fundamentally" new level.

Pantsir is a rapid-fire missile system intended for defense against cruise missiles, drones and low flying aircraft with a range of about 20 kilometers (12 miles).

Focus

By JAY REEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—Antebellum Southern plantations were built on the backs of enslaved people, and many of those plantations hold places of honor on the National Register of Historic Places—but don't look for many mentions of slavery in the government's official record of places with historic significance.

The register's written entries on the plantations tend to say almost nothing about the enslaved people who picked the cotton and tobacco or cut the sugar cane that paid for ornate homes that today serve as wedding venues, bed-and-breakfast inns, tourist attractions and private homes—some of which tout their inclusion on the National Register like a gold star.

The National Register of Historic Places lists more than 95,000 sites that are important to the story of the United States. From some of the most famous places—such as George Washington's Mount Vernon estate—to scores of lesser-known plantation homes in the rural South, register entries often ignore the topic of slavery or mention it only in passing, an Associated Press review found.

Experts blame a generational lack of concern for the stories of black people and, in many cases, a shortage of records. While some narratives have been updated to include information about enslavement, such changes aren't mandatory and many have not.

The National Register's entry for Mount Vernon, approved in 1977, doesn't use the word "slave," although more than 300 enslaved black people worked the first president's fields, cooked his food and cleaned the house where tourists now roam.

The entry for Thomas Jefferson's mountaintop home, Monticello, notes that the third president owned as many as 200 slaves. Yet it generally avoids discussing them or the details of their ownership by the author of the Declaration of Independence.

The same is true for plantation after plantation across the former Confederate states.

Those omissions likely contributed to the loss of slave housing and other structures linked to the economy of enslavement because no one deemed them important, preservationist Ashley Rogers said.

"The problem is, the damage has been done," said Rogers, executive director of the

US 'honor roll' of historic places often ignores slavery



In this Jan. 30, 2020 photo, the Magnolia Grove, an antebellum plantation house in Greensboro, Ala., is seen. The home's entry in the National Register of Historic Places doesn't mention its ties to slavery even though visitors can see a display on enslaved people in an old slave dwelling. An Associated Press review found that many register entries for pre-Civil War plantations virtually ignore slavery.

Whitney Plantation Museum near New Orleans.

The Whitney, which documents slavery at a pre-Civil War plantation near New Orleans, draws tens of thousands of visitors annually and is known for discussing topics that other tourist plantations ignore. Yet even its entry in the National Register, completed in 1992 before the current owner purchased it, doesn't mention the slaves who toiled there.

Similarly, visitors to Mount Vernon or Monticello in Virginia can now hear stories and see exhibits about slave life—but those features were added long after the landmarks became some of the first sites listed in the National Register.

The National Register's incomplete stories reflect the way the public ignores the topic of enslaved people, said

Hasan Kwame Jeffries, an associate professor at Ohio State University who specializes in areas including African American history.

"It's telling us what we have been valuing as a society and how we understand slavery," Jeffries said.

Congress established the National Register of Historic Places under a 1966 historic preservation act aimed at coordinating preservation work and highlighting the nation's most historic sites.

Along with bragging rights, a listing on the National Register can help property owners financially. More than \$160 billion has been invested in preserving 44,000 historic places nationwide under a tax credit program approved in 1976, according to the National Park Service, which oversees the program.

Property owners, local groups and government agencies nominate sites for inclusion on the National Register, noting architectural features, historic significance and other information. State preservation offices review the nominations and submit them to the Park Service for a final decision.

Those nomination forms, available on government websites, make up the bulk of information that's publicly available about places listed on the register, the Park Service said. And they often ignore the enslaved people who provided the labor on antebellum plantations.

Magnolia Grove, a state-owned antebellum plantation home dating to 1835 in Greensboro, Alabama, has a slave cabin that tourists can visit, plus displays about en-

slaved people, yet its 1972 entry on the National Register doesn't mention slaves.

The state-operated Kingsley Plantation near Jacksonville, Florida, was home to slaves, yet its National Register entry doesn't say who they were or how they were forced to work in the Southern heat. Instead, it describes tabby—a kind of concrete made of oyster shells—and the "colorful" slave trader Zephaniah Kingsley, who gets credit for having "carefully trained" enslaved people to farm his cotton.

A historian who has researched the antebellum South, Clifton Ellis, said many National Register entries reflect a time when neither African American history nor the cultural importance of buildings were emphasized.

"You might see that there's a relation between lack of in-

formation and when they were written," said Ellis, of Texas Tech University. "It was only during the '70s that historians were beginning to look at slavery more closely. That took time to work its way through the academy."

Many plantation owners also kept poor records of slave life and did little to preserve reminders of it—another reason for the information void.

The civil rights movement drew attention to the need for inclusive history, Ellis said, and nominations have improved with time. Property owners and historical groups are allowed to update National Register entries with new information. Some have done so with information about slaves.

Today, any new nomination of an antebellum site that doesn't discuss its ties to slavery would be rejected for more work, said Sarah David, who oversees the National Register program for North Carolina.

"You can't talk about something that was built before the Civil War without talking about enslaved people," she said. "They were just in it. They may have built it."

The historical blindness about slavery and enslaved people isn't limited to plantations in the National Register.

The entry for Alabama's white-domed Capitol details its role as the place where delegates established the Confederate States of America in 1861, but doesn't cite slavery's role in the rebellion or Horace King, a one-time slave credited with building the elegant, curved stairways in the building's main entrance.

Joe McGill routinely sleeps in old slave homes as part of The Slave Dwelling Project, which seeks to tell the forgotten stories of enslaved people. Sketchy accounts of slavery are a product of a decades-long period when white male historians primarily told the stories of white males, he said.

"It needs to be corrected because it coincides with an incomplete narrative," said McGill, who has slept in about 150 slave dwellings in 25 states in the South and the North.

But updating all that outdated history would be daunting, historians said.

With hundreds of old plantations listed on the National Register and many preservationists focused on saving endangered sites rather than updating information about existing ones, rounding out the history of antebellum farms could take years.

"It would take a massive effort," said Ellis.

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW:

The **2021 Kia Seltos** is a string new contender among affordable compact SUVs

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—It's fitting that Kia's newest crossover, the Seltos, takes its name from Celtus, the son of Hercules, for certainly Kia finds itself in a position of strength right now.

Kia's three-row Telluride not only won North American Utility Vehicle of the Year, Motor Trend SUV of the Year, and Car & Driver's 10 Best, among many others; it's so popular that Kia dealers have less than a 10-day supply on hand (a 60-day supply is considered normal). Perhaps that's why Kia executives are calling it the Sell-U-Ride.

Now comes the Seltos, which slots between the smaller and quirkier Soul—recently redesigned as well—and the Sportage. As is increasingly the case with Kia, the Seltos shares its underpinnings with Hyundai, in this case the Hyundai Kona. That said, the Seltos is larger, with a greater cargo capacity and a slightly higher starting price. Utility aside, the Kia is far better looking than its Hyundai cousin, which is stylistically challenged by an over-caffeinated design and cheap gray plastic cladding reminiscent of a Pontiac Aztek. Instead, the Kia's black wheel arch cladding is more subdued, blending with front and rear skid plates and chrome trim that lend the Seltos' appearance a sophisticated sporty off-road classicism, capped by an optional two-tone roof.

The inside story is similarly impressive.

Offered in LX, S, EX and SX trim levels, the asymmetrical dashboard orients its controls towards the driver, although they're still easily accessible for the front seat passenger. A large horizontal hi-res, full-color touchscreen is easy to read, reach and op-



2021 Kia Seltos SX Turbo AWD (KIA/TNS)

erate. A row of redundant physical buttons underlines the screen, making shortcuts a breeze. The climate control is located beneath that in a row of simple elegant controls. At the base of the center stack is Qi wireless charging, a USB port and space for knick-knacks.

Piano black plastics and a gracefully simple design offset the abundance of hard-grained plastics. Still, it's a nicely trimmed cabin for the price, and the center stack in particular looks as if it was plucked from a German car rather than a Korean one.

The front seats strike a good balance between comfort and support. The test car's seat heaters have three settings, and warm up quickly and effectively. The power front driver's seat electrically adjusts for height, seatback angle and forward/rearward travel, making it easy to find a good driving position. There's also

a manually adjustable tilt/telescopic steering wheel. The front passenger's seat adjusts fore and aft, and for seatback angle, but not for height. Regardless, they prove to be roomy, as do the surprisingly spacious back seats. A generous cargo area with adjustable height floor allows for substantial cargo flexibility.

The base Seltos engine is a 2.0-liter Atkinson Cycle four-cylinder engine that produces 146 horsepower through a continuously variable transmission. A more powerful 1.6-liter turbocharged four is also offered, and generates 175 horsepower with a seven-speed dual clutch transmission. The EPA rates the 2.0-liter engine at 27 mpg city, 31 mpg highway, with the turbo engine faring slightly worse, but still impressive, at 25 mpg city, 30 highway.

The test vehicle was a top-of-the-line SX Turbo, with the

turbocharged 1.6-liter four-cylinder engine and seven-speed dual clutch transmission used in several other Kia models. There's a hint of turbo lag at initial throttle input, but power comes on quickly in a smooth surge, and throttle response is lively at speed. Coupled with quick steering that has great on-center feel, the Seltos is an easy trucklet to drive smoothly. Emergency braking is impressive.

Despite being an inexpensive crossover, the Seltos shines when the road turns rough, unpaved or curvy. Through the twisting roads of Texas Hill Country, bump absorption was impressive, with no side-to-side rocking or road shock. Even crowned two-lane roads and uneven road surfaces don't upset the Seltos' composure. Abrupt maneuvers fail to bring out tire squeal, and the Seltos always proves controllable, with high-

er cornering limits than you might expect in a mainstream CUV. It's quite remarkable for this price class, and is a class above in demeanor.

It's also fun to drive, thanks to an all-wheel drive system that uses torque vectoring to maintain the vehicle's intended path through corners. There's also a locking center differential for when the road turns slick, in addition to three selectable driving modes that regulate throttle response, transmission shifts and steering feel.

That said, the lack of steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters is disappointing. Flicking the transmission lever is a lot less thrilling, not to mention less safe since you must remove your right hand from the wheel.

While Kia didn't provide any 2.0-liter models to test, if the Hyundai Kona is any indication, it will be less entertaining

NUTS & BOLTS

2021 Kia Seltos SX Turbo AWD

- Base price: \$27,890
- Engine: 1.6-liter turbo-charged four-cylinder
- Horsepower/Torque: 195/175
- EPA fuel economy (city/highway): 25/30 mpg
- Fuel required: Regular
- Wheelbase/Length/Width: 103.5/172/70.9 inches
- Ground clearance: 7.3 inches
- Cargo capacity: 26.6-62.8 cubic feet
- Curb weight: 3,317 pounds

to drive, but still impressive.

The cabin is quiet at speed, although there is some road noise over rough surfaces, but it's not objectionable. That makes it easier to hear the Bose audio system, and while sound quality is OK, it calls to mind the old truism about the brand—no highs, no lows, must be Bose.

That said, the number of driver assistance systems depends on trim level, with the LX being deprived of most. Instead, opt for the S, with lane departure warning, lane following assist, lane keeping assist, forward collision warning and automatic high-beams. Nevertheless, my favorite is Leading Vehicle Departure Alert, which alerts you when vehicle ahead has pulled away and you haven't notice because you're texting. It works as advertised, flashing a notice in the instrument cluster. But it would be more effective if it also made a sound in conjunction with the on-screen notification, because if you're busy texting, you won't notice the screen flashing in front of you.

Go with a California-compliant catalytic converter

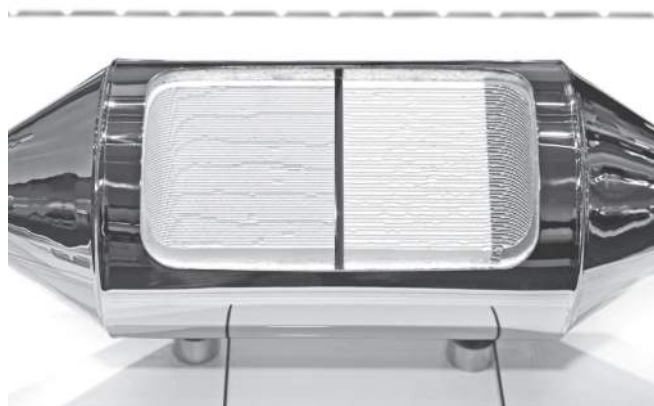
Q: My 2010 Subaru Forester needs a catalytic converter. The car has a California CARB-compliant cat. I live in Connecticut. Do I have to replace it with a California unit or can I use a 48-state one?

A: The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environment requires that vehicles sold in the state since 2008 meet strict California emission standards. Motor vehicles certified to California emission standards meet more stringent standards for hydrocarbons (HC), nitrogen oxides (NOx); and carbon monoxide (CO) than vehicles certified to the federal standards. Also, the engine management system is calibrated for that unit.

Short answer? Yes, you should install a cat that is CARB (California Air Resources Board) compliant.

Q: Why are manufacturers' Technical Service Bulletins no longer public domain? I always learned something about my vehicle from reading them.

A: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website says: You can find free summaries of many technical service bulletins for a specific vehicle (along with details about safety investigations, complaints, and other information) by entering your vehicle's year, make and model at SaferCar.gov and clicking on the "Service Bulletins" tab.



When installing a catalytic converter, do one that's California Air Resources Board compliant.

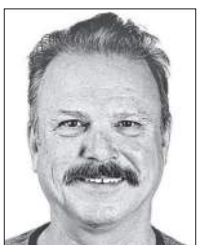
DREAMSTIME/TNS

Q: A friend of mine changes his own brake fluid in his cars. Before he sends new fluid to each wheel, he puts a small amount of food coloring dye in the master cylinder. He says by doing this, there is no question whether or not new fluid has gotten to each wheel.

MOTORMOUTH

By **BOB WEBER**

Chicago Tribune



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

He has been doing this for many years and says there has never been a problem. Do you think that this could cause any harm to the brake system?

A: I would not advise it. Food coloring is water based and the hydraulic system should be water free. The water can boil and vaporize from the heat generated during braking. Vapor can be compressed causing the brakes to fade.

Life & Style

Carnival in Belgium again has Jewish stereotypes in parade

By **RAF CASERT**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRUSSELS (AP)—The Aalst Carnival parade included stereotypical depictions of Jews for the second year in a row and the Belgian government said that the anti-Semitism in the three-day festival embarrassed the nation and endangers society.

The Carnival was kicked off the United Nations' UNESCO heritage list last year after a float rife with anti-Semitic symbols raised worldwide condemnation. Yet despite all the warnings, some again targeted Jews.

"Even though Aalst Carnival is much more than that, these facts detract from our values and reputation of our country," Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes said in a statement.

Festival committee chair Dirk Verleysen said floats

or individuals "that exceed all limits" of decency would be taken out of the parade, but offensive elements did appear.

Earlier this week, Israel called on Belgium to scrap the annual Aalst parade. Yet one group on Sunday walked around the parade dressed up like insects with fur hats worn by some ultra-Orthodox Jewish men.

Wilmes suggested that authorities would see if they could take action.

"Belgium is a state of law. It is for the Justice Department and concerned authorities to see if the events during Carnival are in contravention of the law."

She said that stereotypes that stigmatize "lead to division. It endangers society. Specifically when it comes to repeated and conscious actions."

Aalst mayor Christoph D'Haese, who has been criti-



A Brexit themed float fronted with a caricature of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is paraded in the annual carnival parade in Aalst, Belgium, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020. APO

cized for taking insufficient action after last year's offensive float, called Wilmes "otherworldly," and added that "I did not see an anti-Semitic or racist parade. To the contrary, I saw a high mass of free speech and creativity." He took time to pose with a Carnival reveler wearing a stereotypical hooked nose.

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, countered D'Haese's view and said that "the satirical

procession with anti-Semitic tropes in Aalst, Belgium, are extremely offensive and abuse the power of free speech which is such an essential ingredient in any liberal democracy."

The EU office of the American Jewish Committee immediately called on the European Union to investigate the parade.

"Belgian authorities did nothing to prevent the outright anti-Semitic costumes, which clearly violate the EU's founding values, built on the lessons

of the Holocaust and World War II," said Daniel Schwamenthal, director of the AJC Brussels-based Transatlantic Institute.

The overwhelming majority of the 75-plus official entries

in the parade's 92nd edition may have touched on anything from town hall politics to Brexit and global climate change, but several again highlighted the theme which caused such an uproar.

UNESCO plaque unveiled at Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House

LOS ANGELES (AP)—State and local officials in California unveiled a plaque designating architect Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House in Los Angeles as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Democratic U.S. Rep. Adam B. Schiff and Los Angeles City Councilman Mitch O'Farrell delivered remarks at a ceremony Sunday, *The Los*

Angeles Times reported.

Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs officials also attended the unveiling at the Hollyhock House, which earned the city its first World Heritage designation in July.

There are 1,121 World Heritage Sites globally, with 869 of those awarded cultural status. The Hollyhock House is one of eight Wright buildings rep-

resenting the first U.S. modern architecture designations on the World Heritage list.

The others Wright buildings include the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City; the Unity Temple and the Frederick C. Robie House in Chicago; Fallingwater in Mill Run, Pennsylvania; the Herbert and Katherine Jacobs House in

Madison, Wisconsin; Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin; and Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Among his most iconic buildings was the Guggenheim with its spiral ramp for viewing galleries. It was completed in 1959, the same year Wright died.

Built between 1918 and 1921 on a hill in East Hollywood, the Hollyhock House in Barnsdall Art Park was almost demolished in the 1940s. The structure is named for stylized motifs of the flower of the same name that dominate its concrete exterior.

The Hollyhock House, Wright's first California commission, is now owned by the city of Los Angeles and serves as an arts center.

"The unveiling of the plaque," O'Farrell said Sunday, "underscores what we already know: The structure represents an unparalleled symbol of cultural heritage and an outstanding contribution to design in the city of Los Angeles and the world."

Take our money, Disney can.

The studio giant has unveiled new official merchandise modeled after the Child—better known as Baby Yoda—from "The Mandalorian." As of Thursday, multiple wide-eyed, green-skinned items are available for preorder, including a lifelike, animatronic replica of the tiny breakout Disney+ star.

"Good Morning America" recently debuted the fresh "Mandalorian" products, ranging from a silver Baby Yoda necklace to a bobblehead-esque Baby Yoda Funko Pop. The star of the show, however, was the giggling, ear-wiggling plush toy, which coos, cocks its head back and forth, blinks and—yes—even wields the Force on voice command.

At the peak of the Disney+ flagship series' popularity in December, the first licensed Baby Yoda Mattel doll surfaced on Walmart's website for \$24.99—floppy ears, tan robes and all. Initial feelings of excitement soon turned to betrayal, however, when it was revealed that the hot com-

modity wouldn't actually arrive until May.

But as quickly as the alien critter achieved overnight fame, various online vendors capitalized on it by making their own Baby Yoda creations, which have been selling at hyperspeed despite Disney's attempts to fend off the unauthorized merch with trademark-infringement complaints. Products ranging from cuddly crocheted toys and infant hats to T-shirts and fan art can be found on craft sites such as Etsy, under intentionally vague listings.

Overwhelming demand for a take-home version of everyone's favorite 50-year-old toddler has even inspired content from comedians like Jimmy Kimmel, who debuted a ridiculous do-it-yourself video last year instructing viewers on how to "make your own Baby Yoda," involving an adult Yoda doll and a microwave.

According to "Good Morning America," the latest Disney-approved collectors' items inspired by "The Child" can be preordered now at most major retailers, including—of course—the Disney store.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House in Los Angeles has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Appeals court approves of \$6.7M award to graffiti artists

By LARRY NEUMEISTER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—A federal appeals court in New York gave its approval Thursday to a \$6.7 million award for nearly two dozen graffiti artists whose spray paintings at a once-famous site that attracted thousands of spectators were destroyed to make room for high-rise luxury residences.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals concluded that a judge was correct to award the damages against developers who destroyed the aerosol artwork in 2013. The appeals court said the action violated the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990, which protects art which has gained recognition.

The Long Island City, Queens, graffiti site known as 5Pointz was a tourist attraction that drew thousands of spectators daily and formed a backdrop to the 2013 movie, “Now You See Me.” It was also a site for an Usher tour. Many of the art works were temporary.

“In recent years, ‘street art,’ much of which is ‘temporary,’ has emerged as a major category of contemporary art,” the 2nd Circuit said in an opinion written by Circuit Judge Barrington D. Parker.

The decision noted that the street artist Banksy has appeared alongside former President Barack Obama and the late Apple



Inc. founder Steve Jobs on Time magazine’s list of the world’s 100 most influential people.

“A Banksy painting at 5Pointz would have possessed recognized stature, even if it were temporary,” the appeals court said.

Since 2002, walls at the 5Pointz site had contained over 10,000 works of art as some of the renderings were temporary and were eventually painted over with the permission of the artists.

In 2013, developers seeking

to capitalize on the rebirth of a once crime-ridden neighborhood destroyed the artwork after banning artists from the area and refusing to let them recover work that could be removed.

After artists sued, U.S. District Judge Frederic Block in Brooklyn concluded that the art works reflected “striking technical and artistic mastery and vision worthy of display in prominent museums if not on the walls of 5Pointz.”

The judge made the award higher than it otherwise would

have been after concluding the destruction of the art was willful because the artists were not given three months that the law allows to salvage their artwork.

A lawyer for the developers declined comment.

In a statement, attorney

AP

In this Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011 file photo, a man shovels snow to clear a driveway near 5pointz, a graffiti art gallery in the Long Island City neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York.

Eric Baum said the artists “are thankful and humbled by today’s ruling.”

The lawyer said the ruling was “a clear indication these Artists’ work is important and should be respected.”

Marie Cecile Flageul, a curator who worked with the 21 artists who will share the award, said the appeals ruling demonstrated how far graffiti has come from the 1970s when many artists used it to express their anger.

“Now, it’s a validated art form which is collected, acquired and showcased in museums and galleries around the world,” she said.

She said real estate entities in New York, Paris and London now look for ways to preserve graffiti art.

Flageul said artists in the United States, Australia, Japan, Brazil and Colombia will share the award.

Top 20 safest cities in the U.S.

These are the safest cities in the U.S., according to a recent analysis of FBI data by the National Council for Home Safety and Security, a trade organization for home-security businesses. The analysis looked at statistics for violent crime and property crime.

RANK	TOWN	STATE	RANK	TOWN	STATE
1.	Lewisboro Town	NY	11.	New Milford	NJ
2.	Wayland	MA	12.	Sudbury	MA
3.	Weston	CT	13.	Channahon	IL
4.	Chester Township	OH	14.	Ridgefield	CT
5.	Grosse Ile Township	MI	15.	Franklin	MA
6.	Norfolk	MA	16.	Oakland Township	MI
7.	Norton	MA	17.	Newtown	CT
8.	Sleepy Hollow Village	NY	18.	New Castle Town	NY
9.	River Vale Township	NJ	19.	Washington Township	NJ
10.	Western Springs	IL	20.	Carmel Town	NY

Source: alarms.org, FBI
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Box office goes ‘Sonic’ again but hears ‘Call of the Wild’



LOS ANGELES (AP)—The hedgehog edged the sled dog by a nose at the box office.

“Sonic: The Hedgehog” zoomed to the top of the box office with a take of \$26.3 million in its second weekend while audiences ignored critics and heeded “The Call of the Wild” as the Harrison Ford CGI dog flick finished a close second with \$24.8 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

It was a strong weekend for both films, with each outperforming expectations and overcoming early doubts about design problems.

Paramount Pictures’ Sega video game adaptation “Sonic the Hedgehog” was a laughingstock when its first trailer was released last year, but after a delay and a title-character makeover, the film has now spent two weeks atop the box office and brought in over \$200 million globally.

20th Century Studios’ “The Call of the Wild” was also mocked by many on social media for its CGI dog—the first five film adaptations of Jack London’s 1903 novel all used real ones—and reviews were decidedly mixed with a Rotten Tomatoes score of 62 percent, but moviegoers bought into the digital dog and his 77-year-old co-star, who would have won the weekend were it not for a late surge from “Sonic.”

“For ‘Call of the Wild’ heading into weekend the estimates were all over the place, as low as 10 million for the weekend, some saying it could do 15, maybe 20,” said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore. “So like ‘Sonic’ it over-performed.”

In a very distant third with \$7 million was “Harley Quinn: Birds of Prey” in its third week.

The weekend’s other wide release, “Brahms: The Boy II” starring Katie Holmes, was fourth with just \$5.9 million.

That was a disappointing opening at a time of year when horror films often do well. 2020 appears to be bucking that trend with family films thriving in the early weeks of the year.

“‘Sonic’ and ‘Call of the Wild’ represent two PG-rated movies where that void in the marketplace for families is the key to their success in this part of the year, a time that’s usually dominated by awards holdovers and R-rated films,” Dergarabedian said.

And those family audiences may be why critics didn’t matter for the top two films.

“PG-rated films are more immune to reviews and are more about the audience. If a kid wants to go see a film, they’re going to go see it” he said.

Best picture winner “Para-

site” continued its post-Oscars surge in a week where its victory was mocked at a rally by President Donald Trump, bringing in \$3.2 million in North America, where it has earned nearly \$50 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included.

1. “Sonic the Hedgehog,” 26.3 million, (\$38.3 million international).
2. “The Call of the Wild,” \$24.8 million, (15.4 million international).
3. “Harley Quinn: Birds of Prey,” \$7 million, (10 million international).
4. “Brahms: The Boy II,” \$5.9 million, (\$2.2 million international).
5. “Bad Boys for Life,” \$5.86 million, (\$8.1 million international).
6. “1917,” \$4.4 million, (\$9.4 million international).
7. “Blumhouse’s Fantasy Island,” \$4.2 million, (\$3.9 million international).
8. “Parasite,” \$3.1 million, (\$8.9 million international).
9. “Jumanji: The Next Level,” \$3 million, (\$1.3 million international).
10. “The Photograph,” \$2.8 million.

German, Dutch carnival parades called off due to weather

BERLIN (AP)—Several cities in western Germany canceled their traditional carnival parades at short notice Sunday, citing severe weather conditions including gusty winds and heavy rains.

In Cologne, the famous school and neighborhood parades were abandoned and in nearby Duesseldorf the carnival celebrations on the city's glitzy Koenigsallee boulevard were also called off.

"In order to protect all participants along the route, the parades cannot take place," Cologne city officials said in a statement.

Some of the parades' participants were already on the way to the celebrations when parts of their costumes were blown away by the wind, the city statement said, explaining its last-minute decision to cancel the parades. About 8,000 people were supposed to participate in the Cologne parades, not including tens of thousands of spectators.

Other cities across Germany also called off their carnival activities because of the storm, including Emmerich, Essen and Salzkotten in the west as well as Heiligenstadt in Thuringia in

central Germany. In Fulda in central Germany, the traditional children's parade with around 1,000 participants and up to 30,000 spectators was also canceled.

In the Netherlands, the gusty winds also led to dozens of parade cancellations.

For Monday, meteorologists are predicting calmer weather conditions and most of the big street parades with dozens of huge floats, brass and samba bands, dancers and candy-throwing "carnivalists" and hundreds of thousands of visitors are expected to take place.



Hundreds of fools of the Elzacher Schüttig walk through the main street during the traditional Schüttig jump carnival parade in Elzach, Germany, Sunday, Feb 23, 2020

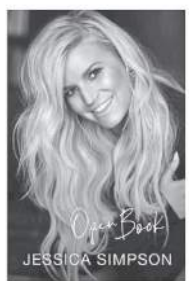
NATIONAL BESTSELLERS



HARDCOVER FICTION

1. "The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse" by Charlie Mackesy (HarperOne) Last week: 4
2. "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins (Flatiron) Last week: 2
3. "Golden in Death" by J.D. Robb (St. Martin's) Last week: 1
4. "Snug: A Collection of Comics about Dating Your Best Friend" by Catana Chetwynd (Andrews McMeel) Last week: 5
5. "Crooked River" by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child (Grand Central) Last week: 3
6. "Lost" by James Patterson and James O. Born (Little, Brown) Last week: 6
7. "Strange Planet" by Nathan W. Pyle (Morrow Gift) Last week: 15
8. "The Guardians" by John Grisham (Doubleday) Last week: 13
9. "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett (Harper) Last week: 10
10. "When You See Me" by Lisa Gardner (Dutton) Last week: 8

HARDCOVER NONFICTION



1. "Open Book" by Jessica Simpson (Dey Street) Last week: 1
2. "A Very Stable Genius: Donald J. Trump's Testing of America" by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig (Penguin Press) Last week: 2
3. "Profiles in Corruption: Abuse of Power by America's Progressive Elite" by Peter Schweizer (Harper) Last week: 3
4. "Get Out of Your Head: Stopping the Spiral of Toxic Thoughts" by Jennie Allen (Waterbrook) Last week: 6
5. "Built, Not Born: A Self-Made Billionaire's No-Nonsense Guide for Entrepreneurs" by Tom Golisano (HarperCollins Leadership) Last week: —
6. "Floret Farm's A Year in Flowers: Designing Gorgeous Arrangements for Every Season" by Erin Benzakein (Chronicle) Last week: —
7. "Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know" by Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown) Last week: 8
8. "Dangerous Prayers: Because Following Jesus Was Never Meant to Be Safe" by Craig Groeschel (Zondervan) Last week: 7
9. "Why We're Polarized" by Ezra Klein (Avid Reader) Last week: 4
10. "Becoming: A Guided Journal for Discovering Your Voice" by Michelle Obama (Clarkson Potter) Last week: 24

Here are the best-sellers for the week that ended Saturday, Feb. 15, compiled from data from independent and chain bookstores, book wholesalers and independent distributors nationwide

Source: Publishers Weekly
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Artist JMW Turner replaces Adam Smith on new UK banknote

LONDON (AP)—Britain's new 20-pound (about \$29) note went into circulation Thursday—one that replaces the image of a pioneering economist with a battered warship being towed away for scrap.

The polymer banknote replaces a paper predecessor bearing the image of 18th-century economist Adam Smith. The new version features a self-portrait of artist J.M.W. Turner alongside his painting "The Fighting Temeraire."

The painting depicts the Royal Navy ship HMS Temeraire, which helped win the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar, being hauled away by a tug at the

end of its life.

Born in 1775, Turner became known as "the painter of light" for his resplendent landscapes and seascapes. The Turner Prize and the Turner Contemporary gallery in the seaside town of Margate, where he once lived, are both named for him.

Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said he was "delighted that the work of arguably the single most influential British artist of all time will now appear on another two billion works of art—the new 20-pound notes that people can start using today."

The bank says polymer notes

are more durable and harder to forge. The new 20 includes features such as see-through windows and a hologram to help thwart counterfeiters.

The paper notes remain legal tender for now.

The 20-pound note is the third denomination to be switched from paper to plastic, following a 5-pound note featuring former Prime Minister Winston Churchill and a 10-pound note bearing the image of author Jane Austen.

A polymer 50-pound note featuring codebreaker and computer scientist Alan Turing is due to enter circulation next year.

Happily unmarried couple reaches impasse over kids

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been dating for more than a decade. We're nearly 30 now. We are happy not being married, and we both agreed early in our relationship that we would not have kids.

All of a sudden, my boyfriend has decided he wants children. I said maybe in the future, but he feels we're running out of time. I still don't want kids, and it's for selfish reasons. I enjoy traveling, having time to myself and just the two of us, peace and quiet, being able to do what I want when I want without having to worry about kids. Is that so wrong? Where do we go from here?

AT ODDS IN MONTANA

DEAR AT ODDS: After 10-plus years, "the future" has arrived. It appears you and your boyfriend have reached a large fork in the road. From here you either go your separate ways or agree to relationship counseling to see if there may be a way to bridge this gap.

DEAR ABBY: For the last 25 years, we have gone on several weekend getaways with another couple. They are now suggesting a one-week vacation together. The issue is, they constantly either talk to or text their children while we are with them. They call to tell them the weather, where we're eating, get updates on their various sporting events, etc.

We also have children and grandchildren, but we wait until we return home to reconnect and hear about their weekend and tell about ours. We love our kids, but we don't need to be constantly connected.

Except for us, this couple's entire social life appears to revolve around their children's lives, and it is pretty much all they talk about. We're not sure we can tolerate this for an entire week. We don't want to lose these friends, but don't know how to decline a week of this. Please advise.

VACATION FROM THE VACATION

DEAR VACATION: Constantly texting and calling in the presence of others is rude. Because you are hesitant to call them on it, try this: Unless they know you take week-long vacations with other friends, tell them you prefer shorter visits with other couples. In their case, it's the truth.

DEAR ABBY: I recently received an email from the grade school-aged son of a close friend, which included a link requesting funding to support his school sports program. My friend told me to expect such an email.

I'm not certain how to respond, as I always encouraged my children to communicate face-to-face when soliciting funds for their school programs, but that was years ago, and I realize this is a new era. It just seems so impersonal to ask for money elec-

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

tronically, especially when I barely know the young man. Are my expectations wrong? How would you handle this?

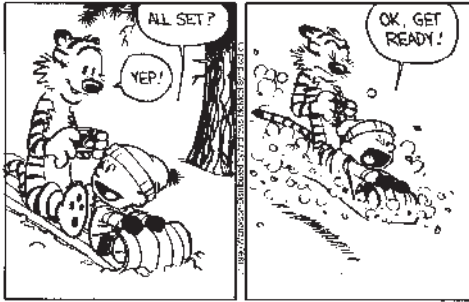
CHECK'S IN THE E-MAIL

DEAR CHECK'S IN: Despite how the request was made, if you want to support the program, do so. If not, then don't. Personally, I would ignore the email, and if I was asked about it, I would politely decline.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



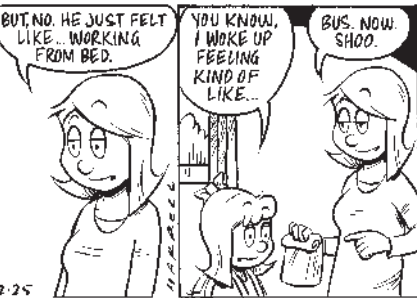
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



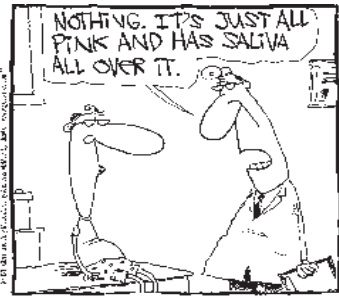
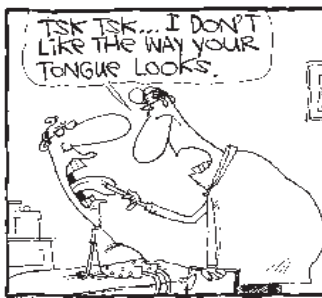
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Fibs

5 CEO's deg.

8 Be slack-jawed

12 Not pizzicato

13 A billion years

14 Russian river

15 Crumbly earth

16 Russian empresses

18 Canonized theologian

20 "It's the end of —"

21 N.J. neighbor

22 Bio stat

23 Pizza feature

26 Tropical lizards

30 Not 'neath

31 Expert

32 Hosp. areas

33 Crazy

36 Small songbird

38 Book-spine abbr.

39 Part of mph

40 Zagreb native

43 Some cigars

47 Southwestern saloons

49 — contendere

50 Early Peruvian

51 Crunchy sandwich

53 Disney CEO

54 Co-quettish

55 Lip

DOWN

1 Tibetan monk

2 Persian Gulf

3 Off-white

4 Three-dimensional shapes

5 Rock genre

6 Employer

7 Literary collection

8 Old British coin

9 "Rule, Britannia!" composer

10 Jack of early talk

11 "Frozen" snow queen

17 Pasta sauce brand

19 Badminton barrier

22 Past

23 Male swan

24 Stephen of "Still Crazy"

25 Coffee vessel

26 Apr. address-ee

27 British big shot

28 "Exodus" hero

29 Tax form ID

31 Crony

34 Online icon

35 Terse denial

36 Speed (up)

37 Arboreal apes

39 Ashen

40 Roman

41 Pealed

42 Formerly

43 Angelic light

44 The Big Easy

45 Pub orders

46 "— and Lovers" (D.H. Lawrence novel)

48 "This Is Us" network

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-25

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Rashida Jones, 44; Chelsea Handler, 45; Sean Astin, 49; Tea Leoni, 54.

Happy Birthday: Embrace what life has to offer. Put the past behind you. Savor only what's important to you, and offer what you don't want or need for those who would benefit from your charitable donation. Turn this into a do-good, feel-good year, and the personal reward will bring you satisfying results. Pay attention; your intuition will guide you. Your numbers are 7, 18, 24, 29, 31, 38, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Listen carefully; if you act too quickly, you will make a mistake. Observe what others are doing, and follow each possibility from beginning to end before making a move. Choose civil action over a force play; you'll excel. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A long shot will pan out for you today. Don't neglect to see that you are in a good position. Work or financial matters will turn in your favor. An older reliable source will offer stellar information. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Sit tight, even if someone tempts you with something that appears to be a sure thing. Take steps to make a positive change to the way you look, your attitude or your relationship. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Adjust whatever isn't working for you. Added discipline will help you follow through with your plans and encourage others to step up and join in whatever it is you are trying to achieve. Personal and professional gains are within reach. *****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Love is in the stars, but don't let jealousy kick in and cause a problem. Affirmative and loving action will bring out the best in you. Get involved in humanitarian activities, and you will make a valuable connection. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Plan to do something you enjoy with people you feel comfortable with, and you'll get good results. There will be substantial gains financially and professionally if you pay close attention to detail. A positive change at home will improve your personal life. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't put up with meddling, interference or pushy behavior. Take the initiative to remove yourself from any situation causing you grief. Deal with responsibilities quickly, and move on to self-care and pampering. Walk away from bad habits and poor influences. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): There is some uncertainty regarding doing things with family or pursuing an outside interest. Consider whether it's worth it to neglect personal responsibilities. Offer to split your differences and share your plans to avoid hurt feelings. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Keep your promises within reason. Don't exaggerate or lead someone on, or it will come back to haunt you. Don't set yourself up for a fall or let anyone back you into a corner. Words matter and truth counts, so do what's right. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Success is within reach. Money and recognition will put you in a good position to dictate what you want to happen. Take the high road, be a humanitarian and speak the truth. Do your part, and be proud of your accomplishments. ****



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Stick to what makes you feel good. Nurture your emotional and physical well-being. Give yourself a chance. Rediscover what you enjoy most in life, and challenge anyone or anything that stands between you and your happiness. ***



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A firm stance, knowledge and intuitive guidance will help you make a wise decision. Follow through with speedy action, and you'll see a remarkable change that will benefit you as well as others. Put the past to rest, and move forward. ***

Birthday Baby: You are competitive, refreshing and innovative. You are precise and proud.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn. Copyright 2020 Andrews McMeel Syndication

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

	5		7				4		
6								8	
1			9	5				6	
		3	1	9	5			7	
2		4	3	6	8				
4			5	7				2	
7									1
	1			4			6		

Difficulty Level ★★

2/25

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	2	5	7	3	9	4	1	8
9	1	4	5	8	2	7	6	3
8	3	7	1	4	6	2	5	9
2	6	8	4	7	5	3	9	1
4	5	9	2	1	3	6	8	7
3	7	1	9	6	8	5	4	2
1	4	2	8	5	7	9	3	6
7	8	6	3	9	4	1	2	5
5	9	3	6	2	1	8	7	4

Not Today Level A

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THUNDERSNOW

Solution: 8 letters

C H D E N S I T Y S M R O T S
A O A S Y S T E M H J A P A N
R I N Z A R Z R R D A D E E P
E T R V A E D R A Z Z I L B Y
T S A C E R O F W N V U L V C
E E K R R C D N I W G S A Y F
M R F S L A T S Y R C E C L S
O E V M X A F I L A H L A T E
R V A O E C I T O T O S O T E
A E R L L A U Q S N H N R E T
B R I E P A S T E E K O E L N
O A A V M O T U E V W W T L I
L R B A O S L I R E H T A E W
T O L W C E K A L E L R W P Y
P R E D I C T O R E T S U L C

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2/25

Aircraft, Barometer, Blizzard, Bolt, Clear, Cluster, Complex, Convection, Crystals, Cyclone, Deep, Density, Event, Everest, Flash, Forecast, Freeze, Hall, Halifax, Hazard, Heavy, Japan, Knots, Lake, Measure, Pellet, Polar, Predictor, Radius, Flare, Sleet, Snow, Squall, Storms, Strange, System, Track, Trowel, Variable, Volatile, Warm, Water, Wave, Weather, Wind, Winter

Yesterday's Answer: Heathland

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 40, 42, and 44 through 58 order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR LONG TERM LEASE

A fenced-in 3 Bedroom all concrete residential building located in Koblerville, Lot size is 748 square meters. Serious Inquiries only. Call 670 483-4258 or email to galu4258@yahoo.com

FOR RENT

3 bedroom residential for Rent, Located in Dandan in a Private area Newly Built Structure with most major appliances included \$950 a month- 2 weeks FREE if 1 year lease signed by March 1, 2020. Call- (670) 783-1015



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COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
San Jose Village P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. Nos: (670) 234-7145/7146/6293/6245
Fax No.: (670) 235-7147
Website: www.developcndmi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
February 25, 2020

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DIVISION (DCD) THRU ITS CHAIRMAN AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA) THRU ITS CHAIRMAN, HEREBY INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM, THE DCD AND CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

/s/ IGNACIO L. PEREZ
Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

/s/FRANK LEE SN. BORJA
Chairman, DCD Board of Directors

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE
Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold its Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
a.) Call to Order
b.) Roll Call
c.) Adoption of Agenda
d.) Adoption of Minutes
1. January 30, 2020 – Regular Meeting

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS¹

III. REPORTS
a.) Chair's Report
b.) Executive Director's Report

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

V. NEW BUSINESS
a) Licensing Matters
1. Bridge Investment Group, LLC

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION²

VII. MISCELLANEOUS/ ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

¹Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
²Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB20-CHCC-OD2A-001
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 11, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM
“LEASE VEHICLE”
INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)/INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **RFP's** TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP/ITB. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.
THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/s/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/s/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Imwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 Facsimile (670) 236-9797

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP20-JUDICIARY-02
SUBMISSION DATE: February 26, 2020 TIME: 3:00 P.M.
“WINDOW REPAIR”
COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED BY VISITING THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IMWAL AWEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.
THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.
THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

ONE (1) SHELTER WORKER
For more information, job description and application can be obtained from Karidat Main Office at Sister Remedios Community Center Chalan Kanoa.
DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: Complete application form, copy of diploma, resume, current police clearance and a copy of valid CNMI driver's license.
NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2020 AT 4:00PM

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@ptcom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2020
Opening date: February 12, 2020 Closing date: March 04, 2020

Positions:

(1) Electrician (Saipan)

(1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)

(1) Receptionist/Secretary (Saipan)

(1) HR Specialist (Saipan)

(1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer (Tinian)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Wednesday, March 04, 2020.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.
CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

WHATZIT Solution: Tied up in knots

RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a complete 5-day run of liner ads, for as low as \$15 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	
• 3-Liner	\$15
• 5-Liner	\$24

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

BEND REEF SLIP HITCH

www.facebook.com/dingbatgames

WHATZIT? © 2020 www.whatzit.com
Articulated by Andrews McMeel Syndication

Find today's solution in classified section

LeBron's clutch jumper lifts Lakers past Celtics



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Although LeBron James is still relatively new to the Los Angeles Lakers' rivalry with the Boston Celtics, he relishes the chance to participate in the history and passion behind this series.

When James had the chance Sunday to make another significant mark in this chapter of NBA history, he stepped back and did it with pleasure.

James scored 29 points and put the Lakers ahead on a fallaway jumper with 30 seconds to play, and Los Angeles split its season series with Boston in a 114-112 victory.

James also had nine assists and eight rebounds in another superb all-around game. He missed a tying free throw moments before he coolly nailed the turnaround shot over Jayson Tatum to put the Lakers ahead to stay in their fifth straight win overall.

"I had been setting him up all night with the back-down to the drop step to the baseline," James said. "I figured he would sit on it, thinking I would try it again, so I just went to my back-down, gave a little Dream Shake to the baseline and was able to open up the middle and get my fadeaway."

When Tatum was called for an offensive foul in the final second, the Lakers could celebrate another memorable meeting between two clubs with 33 NBA titles between them.

James put up a triple-double when the Lakers won in Boston last season in his first taste of the rivalry, but LA had lost his ensuing two meetings with the Celtics.

"It's just special to be part of this rivalry," James said. "We understand that this has been going on since the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s, '90s, all the way through. So to be a part of a rivalry, to be a part of a historical two-franchise group, this is special. ... (We love) to represent this rivalry with the utmost respect and play this game the right way, as all the former players have done in the past."

James was thinking of Celtics great Bill Russell, who watched the game at courtside while wearing Kobe Bryant's jersey. He was also thinking of Tatum, who matched his career high with 41 points while wearing a purple wristband in memory of Bryant, a mentor and teacher to the Celtics star.

"That's a great atmosphere," said Boston's Jaylen Brown, who scored 20 points. "It don't get too much better than that. To be honest, I had a great time. Even though we lost, it was fun being out there



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James (23) is defended by Boston Celtics' Marcus Smart (36) and Jayson Tatum during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020, in Los Angeles.

Bulls 126, Wizards 117

In Chicago, Coby White scored 33 points to join Michael Jordan as the only Bulls rookies with consecutive 30-point games, and the Bulls overcame Bradley Beal's career-high 53 points to snap an eight-game losing streak.

Zach LaVine added 32 points and broke the franchise record for 3-pointers in a season. Thaddeus Young scored 25 points, going 5 of 7 from beyond the arc.

Nuggets 128, Timberwolves 116

In Denver, Paul Millsap scored a season-high 25 points on 9-of-11 shooting and Denver Nuggets bounced back from its first loss in the Northwest Division to beat Minnesota.

Millsap made his first six shots of the game before missing with 54 seconds left in the first half.

Nikola Jokic was nearly as sharp, making all six of his shots in the first half and going 11 of 14 from the field. He finished with 24 points and Jamal Murray had 19. Denver shot 58.9% after hitting 68.2% in the first half.

Thunder 131, Spurs 103

In Oklahoma City, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 22 points and 13 rebounds, Steven Adams added 21 points and 14 rebounds and Oklahoma City rolled past San Antonio Spurs 131-103 on Sunday night.

Luguentz Dort, a rookie who is on a two-way contract, scored 15 points on 6-for-6 shooting, and Chris Paul added 12 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds to help the Thunder win for the 12th time in 15 games. Eight Oklahoma City players scored in double figures—a first for the team since moving from Seattle in 2008.

Pelicans 115, Warriors 101

In San Francisco, Zion Williamson had 28 points and seven rebounds, Jrue Holiday scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and New Orleans pulled away to beat Golden State.

Nicolo Melli matched his career high with 20 points and six 3-pointers, and Brandon Ingram had 17 points and five assists to help the Pelicans win for the fifth time in six games.

Damion Lee scored 22 points for Golden State.

competing at the highest level, and it makes you thirsty for the postseason."

Anthony Davis had 32 points and 13 rebounds for the Lakers, who took a 32-point blowout loss in Boston last month. The Celtics had won 12 of 14 starting with that dominant win.

Davis hit two free throws with 12.3 seconds left in the rematch and added one more with 6.7 seconds to play. But Tatum was called for a push-off foul as he attempted to create space for one last shot against Kentavious Caldwell-Pope.

Tatum scored just six points in the final 18 minutes, with Caldwell-Pope doing much of

the defensive work.

"It was a step in the right direction," Tatum said of his performance against James and Davis. "I definitely looked up to those guys and know how great they are individually, so just trying to earn the respect of the guys I look up to."

With the Lakers' immediate return to excellence since beating out Boston to acquire Davis last summer, these longtime rivals are both playoff-bound championship contenders yet again.

Los Angeles is comfortably atop the Western Conference standings, while the Celtics sit third in the East. Both teams have a decent shot of meet-

ing in the NBA Finals for the 13th time if they continue to grow from big games like this thriller.

The Celtics played without star Kemba Walker, who missed his second straight game with left knee soreness.

Raptors 127, Pacers 81

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry had 16 points and 11 assists and the Raptors routed Indiana in the most-lopsided victory in team history to win for the 17th time in 18 games and extend its home winning streak to nine.

Pascal Siakam added 21 points and Serge Ibaka had 15 points and a season-high 15 rebounds. Toronto's largest

lead was 49 points.

Domantas Sabonis had 14 points and 11 rebounds for Indiana. Aaron Holiday also scored 14 points.

Trail Blazers 107, Pistons 104

In Portland, CJ McCollum had 41 points, a career-high 12 assists and nine rebounds, Carmelo Anthony scored a season-high 32 points and the Trail Blazers rallied to beat Detroit.

It was the first time Anthony scored over 30 points since Feb. 25, 2017, when he was with the New York Knicks. He made a jumper with Portland protecting a two-point lead with 21 seconds left.

Bucks clinch playoff spot earlier than any team in NBA history

Here's the thing about the 2019-20 Milwaukee Bucks: They are a really, really good basketball team.

How good? Well, how about the fact that they have clinched a spot in the NBA playoffs ... on Feb. 23. Two months before the playoffs are scheduled to start in mid-April.

The Bucks officially punched their ticket on Sunday, despite not playing a game that day. Instead, the team watched as the ninth-place Washington Wizards fell 126-117 to the Chicago Bulls, pushing the Wizards 27.5 games back with 27 games to play.

According to the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, that's the earliest a team has

clinched the playoffs in the history of the current format, besting the 2017 Warriors' mark of Feb. 25.

Of course, it was long a given that the 48-8 Bucks were making the playoffs between their talent and the putridness of the Eastern Conference. Preseason odds of the Bucks missing the postseason were so long that one gambler had to bet \$10,000 on them making it to win \$100 (congratulations to him/her).

Behind Giannis Antetokounmpo, the Bucks have managed to top the heights of last year's Eastern Conference No. 1 seed squad, and it's primarily thanks to their mutant MVP frontrunner

somehow getting even better.

The Greek Freak is currently averaging 30.0 points, 13.6 rebounds and 5.8 assists per game while leading the league in defensive rating and averaging only 30.9 minutes. Just imagine if he played as many minutes as the rest of the MVP field. The Bucks haven't given him much reason to, though, as the team has won 33 of its 56 games by double digits.

The Bucks currently have a 6.5-game lead over the Toronto Raptors for the No. 1 seed, so the team should have plenty of breathing room to prepare for the playoffs over the next two months. Milwaukee will be looking to

improve on last year's finish, an Eastern Conference finals loss to the Raptors.

Meanwhile, Markieff Morris has signed with the Los Angeles Lakers for the post-season push.

The Lakers announced the deal Sunday to add the nine-year NBA veteran immediately after he cleared waivers.

Los Angeles waived injured center DeMarcus Cousins to clear a roster spot.

Morris reached a buyout agreement with the Pistons on Friday. He averaged 11 points and 3.9 rebounds in 44 games with Detroit this season while hitting a career-best 39.7% of his 3-pointers and playing solid defense.

Betts draws big cheer, drives in run during Dodgers debut



GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—

Mookie Betts still has some work to do, settling in with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

On the field, though, he's fine.

"The hardest thing is finding a house and learning everybody's name," Betts said Sunday after making his Cactus League debut. "The baseball's the same. We all have the same focus."

Betts led off and played right field for the Dodgers against the Chicago Cubs at Camelback Ranch. He received an enthusiastic welcome from the sellout crowd of 13,282 when he was introduced before the game with the rest of the Dodger starters and again when he batted in the first inning.

He flied out to left in his first at-bat, flied deep to right in the third inning and drove in a run with a sacrifice fly to center in the fifth inning before coming out of the game.

"Just seeing him at the top of the order, in our lineup, makes everybody around him better," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said after the Dodgers beat the Cubs 4-2. "You felt the energy from the fans too."

Betts, 27, was dealt to the Dodgers from Boston after the two parties were unable to come to an agreement on a long-term contract. He is a free agent after this season.

But after playing in Boston, winning an MVP and a World Series there, he doesn't feel any extra pressure on a new team with high expectations, or entering his free-agent season.

"I try to channel it into working hard," he said. "I don't worry about it."

Roberts has been impressed with Betts' work ethic, as well as his mental approach and



AP
Mookie Betts follows through during his first exhibition at bat for the Dodgers against the Chicago Cubs at Camelback Ranch on Sunday.

overall attitude.

"I knew he'd be professional in every sense of the word," Roberts said. "I didn't realize he'd be as open to talking about how he's feeling at the plate or what he does defensively. A lot of guys just do things, but to kind of share of information, he's always willing to have a conversation about baseball."

Kenley Jansen also made his spring debut, working a perfect second inning for Los Angeles. Jansen, 32, struck out two Cubs.

He is coming off a season that saw him post the highest ERA (3.71) of his 10-year career, all with the Dodgers.

Jansen never really got going after a slow start last spring

but he threw as hard as 93 mph in a 14-pitch outing on Sunday.

"It just seems like he's synced up with his body, his arm's catching up," Roberts said. "If he can stay there, a lot of good things are going to happen."

Céspedes ready for opener

Meanwhile, Yoenis Céspedes expects to be ready to play by opening day. He said so himself.

Six days after saying he didn't plan to speak to the media all season, the New York Mets slugger broke his silence Sunday.

Out of the lineup since July 2018 with heel problems, Céspedes said he planned to play in spring training games by the middle of March. And if

all goes well, he intended to be in the lineup on March 26 when the Mets host the World Series champion Washington Nationals in the opener.

"If I continue progressing the way that I am, yes," he told reporters through a translator. "I feel good. I'm happy with the progress. Every day I'm still working to get better and better. It's not as fast as I want it to be, but as the season approaches, I'm feeling like I'm really good right now."

Asked about his motivation level for this year, on a scale of one to 10, he answered in English: "Twelve."

That's a lot more than Céspedes said Monday, when he shut down media members who approached him in the

clubhouse.

"Not today, not tomorrow, not at all this year," he said.

The 34-year-old Céspedes has played in only 119 games in the first three seasons of a \$110 million, four-year contract, only 38 since the end of the 2017 season.

The two-time All-Star outfielder was out for much of 2017 with hamstring strains, then missed more than two months in 2018 because of a strained hip flexor. He homered at Yankee Stadium in his return on July 20, then went back on the DL and had surgery to remove bone calcification from his right heel on Aug. 2, 2018, and his left that Oct. 26.

While recovering from sur-

gery on his heels last May, Céspedes fractured his right ankle in multiple places in an accident at his ranch just west of the Mets' training complex.

"I am not going to speak about the past," Céspedes said. "I committed an error and paid the price for it, but today I will be talking about the present and the future."

Céspedes and the Mets agreed in December to an amended contract that cut his base salary from \$29.5 million to \$6 million.

Céspedes would raise his pay to \$11 million if he has one active day on the major league roster and to \$20 million if he has 650 plate appearances—a figure he has reached just once.



MEXICO CITY (AP)—

Patrick Reed was more concerned about how to save par than how to answer his critics. He was consumed with navigating around the trees from 152 yards away with a gap wedge more than any chatter about his character.

Reed only plays for himself. And when it feels as though the world is against him, he plays his best.

A week that began with Brooks Koepka saying he thought Reed cheated when he was penalized for swiping away sand in the Bahamas ended with Reed delivering clutch moments down the stretch Sunday to win the Mexico Championship.

Two shots behind with four holes to play, Reed ran off three

Reed shows his moxie, wins Mexico Championship

straight birdies to overtake a faltering Bryson DeChambeau, closing with a 4-under 67 for his second World Golf Championships title.

As for the outside noise?

"I'm used to it," Reed said. "Honestly, it's one of those things that at the end of the day, all I can control is me and what I do on and off the golf course. And if I feel like I'm improving each day on and off the golf course and setting a good example for the next generation coming up ... then that's all I can do, and I feel like I've been doing a good job of that."

If questions remain, they have nothing to do with his moxie. Reed made it interesting in the end with a wild tee shot into the trees on the 18th hole, forcing him to chip back to the

fairway. He had to two-putt from 35 feet for eighth victory of his PGA Tour career.

He one-putted 45 times over 72 holes, an astounding performance on the poa greens of Chapultepec. The birdies at the end might not have mattered without par putts from 10 feet on the 11th and 8 feet on the 13th as DeChambeau was starting to pull away.

"And then after that, the hole seemed to get a little larger," Reed said.

In a wild final round in which five players had a share of the lead—four were tied heading for the back nine—DeChambeau appeared to seize control with five birdies in a six-hole stretch starting at No. 9.

Everyone around him faltered—Justin Thomas, Rory McIlroy, Jon Rahm, Erik van

Rooyen—everyone but Reed, who played bogey-free until he only needed a bogey to win.

DeChambeau missed two good scoring chances on the 15th and 16th, and then he three-putted from 65 feet on the par-3 17th to fall into a tie. Reed seized on the moment. Blocked by the edge of the trees left of the 16th fairway, he hammered a hook with a gap wedge that rolled around the ridge and fed down the slope to 3 feet.

Reed never flinched with so much going on around him, on and off the golf course.

He has yet to shake whippers on the tour and heckling from the gallery over the Hero World Challenge in December, when video caught him twice swiping away sand behind his ball in a waste area in

the Bahamas. Reed accepted the two-shot penalty and said a different camera angle would have shown his club wasn't as close to the ball as it looked.

Koepka became the strongest voice during an interview Monday with SiriusXM in the Bay Area while he was previewing his title defense at the PGA Championship in May.

Radio host Sway Calloway asked Koepka if Reed was cheating.

"Uh, yeah. I think, yeah, yeah," Koepka said, known for speaking his mind. "I mean, I don't know what he was doing, building sand castles in the sand. But you know, you know where your club is. I mean, I took three months off and I can promise you I know if I touched sand."

"If you play the game, you

understand the rules," he said. "You understand the integrity that goes on. I mean, there's no room for it."

Reed said all week that he doesn't listen to what others are playing, he just plays golf.

All he did Sunday was win. If he had anything to prove, it was only to himself.

"Coming into this week, I knew we were in a good pattern and I knew all I needed to do was continue to try to improve on my golf game, but at the same time just block out all the noise, no matter what it was," Reed said. "I feel like I've been able to do that really well throughout my career. ... I've always been able to—when I get inside the ropes—just focus on what I need to do, and that's play golf."

He finished at 18-under 266 and moved to No. 8 in the world.

Bears eye Keenum in QB free agency market



CHICAGO—

The Bears have been connected to all of the big-name free agent quarterbacks this offseason. General manager Ryan Pace is expected to add competition for the starting job in free agency or the 2020 NFL draft after incumbent and former second overall pick, Mitch Trubisky, regressed mightily in his third season last year.

But rather than focus on players like Tom Brady, Philip Rivers and even Marcus Mariota, it makes more sense to pay close attention to the next tier of free agent passers who could offer a potential upgrade from Trubisky while not necessarily creating shockwaves through Halas Hall upon signing.

One quarterback who fits that description perfectly is Case Keenum, the journeyman starter who's entering his 10th season in the league.

Keenum is coming off of back-to-back forgettable seasons with the Broncos and Redskins, but it wasn't long ago when he was one of the better storylines in the NFL after leading the Vikings to 11 wins in 14 starts in 2017. He threw for 3,547 yards, 22 touchdowns and seven interceptions that year and earned himself a respectable two-year, \$36 million contract with Denver in 2018. His tenure as a Bronco lasted just one season (he finished 2018 with a 6-10 record) and his time as the Redskins starter was short-lived in 2019. He started just eight games for Washington.

For his career, Keenum's completed 62.4% of his passes and has thrown 75 touchdowns



AP
In this Dec. 15, 2018 file photo, Denver Broncos quarterback Case Keenum (4) is sacked by Cleveland Browns outside linebacker Jamie Collins (510) during the first quarter of their game at the Mile High Stadium in Denver, Colorado.

compared to 47 interceptions.

Keenum's resume isn't overly impressive, which is why he's a great fit for what Pace should try to accomplish over the next two months. He has to find a competent starter who can take advantage of everything else the Bears have going for them (namely, a championship-caliber defense) and who can be aggressive enough on offense to score enough points to win the close games. Keenum proved in 2017 that he can do that, especially when he has a good supporting case around him.

Keenum also qualifies as a solid bridge quarterback in the event Trubisky crashes and burns in 2020. At 32 years old, he's young enough to keep the starting job for a couple of seasons while Chicago attempts to find a younger long-term answer under center.

Last but not least, he's going to be cheap. He didn't have a good year in 2019, and he was making just \$3.5 million with the Redskins. There will be a limited market for his services this March, which means the Bears should be able to land him at a backup's salary despite his starter's upside. And that matters, especially for a team that's trying to free up salary cap space for other positions of need along the offensive line and secondary.

Keenum won't move the needle much for Bears fans in March, but landing a player of his caliber could ultimately be the difference between the Bears missing the playoffs for the second consecutive season and making a deep playoff run.

NFL pushes back franchise tag period

The start of the franchise designation period in the NFL is being moved back two days, multiple outlets reported Saturday.

The window in which teams can put the franchise tag or transition tag on players will now start Feb. 27 and end March 12, instead of starting Feb. 25 and ending March 10. The NFL Players Association and the NFL management council agreed to change the dates after NFLPA player representatives on Friday delayed a vote on a proposed collective bargaining agreement.

In the event no agreement is reached on a new CBA, each NFL team will be allowed to use the franchise and transition tag this year. If a new CBA is agreed upon, teams would only be allowed to use one or the other.

Multiple outlets have reported that the NFL and NFLPA will meet Tuesday at the scouting combine in Indianapolis.

A vote by the NFLPA board of player representatives could take place either Tuesday night or Wednesday morning, with the possibility of all players voting on the proposal sometime later in the week.

The NFLPA executive committee on Friday voted 6-5 against recommending the currently proposed collective bargaining agreement.

The Champions League is back this week with the remaining four first-leg matches in the round of 16:

Lionel Messi is back in top form going into the game, giving Barcelona extra hope it can leave behind the off-field problems that have hurt the club this year.

Messi ended a four-game scoreless streak with a four-goal performance in the team's 5-0 rout of Eibar in the Spanish league on Saturday at the Camp Nou.

"It's important that he is at his best," Barcelona midfielder Ivan Rakitic said of Messi. "When he is playing well, it's better for all of us."

Barcelona's fourth straight league win helped ease some of the pressure on club president Josep Bartomeu, who was jeered by part of the crowd amid one of the club's worst institutional crises. They include a divisive coaching change and public conflicts between players and club directors.

Messi, Ronaldo back in Champions League action

New coach Quique Setien said the players are not being distracted by these issues and the team carries good momentum entering the match against Napoli, which has won six of its last seven matches in all competition under coach Gennaro Gattuso.

"The team is fully focused," Setien said.

Cristiano Ronaldo shows no sign of slowing down as he attempts to help Juventus end its 24-year wait for the Champions League title.

Ronaldo marked his 1,000th official match by scoring a record-equaling goal to help Juventus win 2-1 at Spal on Saturday.

The 35-year-old Ronaldo scored for an 11th straight league game, matching the Serie A record set by Gabriel Batistuta in 1994 and equaled by Fabio Quagliarella last season.

Ronaldo has scored only two

goals in this season's Champions League but has been in superb form since the end of the group stages and his glut of goals has taken his tally in Serie A to 21 in as many matches.

Lyon coach Rudi Garcia was asked on how he plans to stop Ronaldo.

"You stop him at the border, if he decides that he doesn't like Lyon and doesn't want to play here," Garcia said. "Jokes aside, he can be contained with a defensive team-effort ... I'll say to everyone that it's a challenge, a challenge. This must be the motivation. Also for me."

With that win, Juventus remained one point clear of Lazio at the top of the Italian standings. Lyon also won at the weekend, 2-0 at Metz. It is seventh in the French league.

Meanwhile, Bayern coach Hansi Flick was keen to check

out his options for the upcoming game at Stamford Bridge in the 3-2 win over Paderborn on Friday that kept Bayern top of the Bundesliga.

He played three at the back, with Joshua Kimmich to David Alaba's right and Lucas Hernandez to his left as a central unit, but the latter showed he is still not fully fit after recovering from injury.

Alphonso Davies dropped back to help Hernandez, with Alvaro Odriozola on the other side and appearing slightly lost in his first league start since joining on loan from Real Madrid.

Suspended against Paderborn, Benjamin Pavard will return to the starting lineup against Chelsea, with Jerome Boateng also coming back to strengthen the defense. Both Niklas Sule and Javi Martinez are injured.



Corentin Tolisso and Philippe Coutinho were both taken off early against Paderborn and are unlikely to be given another chance in London, with Thomas Muller and Kingsley Coman expected to be preferred.

Bayern lost the 2012 final in its own stadium on penalties to Chelsea.

"We don't need to speak about it," said captain Manuel Neuer, who along with Muller and Boateng are the only three Bayern players involved from the time.

Frank Lampard played in that game and is now Chelsea's manager, and taking charge of his first Champions League knockout game.

In other developments, Enjoy Manchester City's seismic matchup with Real Madrid across the next three weeks—it might be the last you see of the English club in Europe for a while.

City has vowed to appeal the two-year ban from European competition handed down by UEFA after a panel found that it had seriously flouted financial regulations and failed to cooperate with investigators. If the lawyers fail to overturn the ban, City won't be back in Europe until the 2022-23 season—and the team will likely look very different then.

Probably no Pep Guardiola. Likely no Sergio Aguero. Definitely no David Silva, who is leaving the club at the end of the season after a decade of service. And who knows if the likes of Raheem Sterling and Kevin De Bruyne are going to stick around without the attraction of playing on club soccer's highest stage.

So this might be the last chance this record-breaking team—at least domestically—built by Guardiola has to succeed on the European stage. But City's record in the Champions League is poor, considering the money the club has spent.

Survey finds Olympic, elite athletes struggling financially

The comments could easily have come from any middle-class town where workers have trouble making ends meet: "No pension plan, no chance of structural income over a longer period of time." ... "I will not have savings until the mortgage of my house is paid off." ... "My parents still have to help me pay for my food."

In this case, however, the tales of financial struggle come from some of the best athletes in the world.

In a survey of nearly 500 elite athletes spread across 48 countries, many of them gearing up for the Olympics later this year, an athletes' rights group found that 58% said they did not consider themselves financially stable.

Even greater majorities said they did not receive "the appropriate amount of financial compensation" from the International Olympic Committee or the national federations that send them to the games and other major events.



And 57% answered "Yes" when asked if the IOC should pay athletes to attend its events.

Over the last year, the advocacy group Global Athlete received responses from 491 athletes spread across six continents, about 200 of whom identified themselves as Olympians or Paralympians, and the rest of whom compete at an elite level in their country or at an international level. The responses painted one of the most thorough pictures of the long-documented reality of competing at the highest levels of Olympic sports: Hardly anyone gets rich, while the majority are poor and largely beholden to the bureaucracies that fund this diverse cross-section of what are, by and large, niche sports.

As part of the survey, athletes who said they did not consider

themselves financially secure were given the chance to explain. There were 89 responses, most of which sounded similar themes:

AP
In this July 23, 2016, file photo, a representation of the Olympic rings are displayed in the Olympic Village in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. An eye-opening survey finds that the majority of elite and Olympic athletes struggle to make ends meet. 58 percent of the 491 respondents from across the globe said they did not consider themselves financially stable.

themselves financially secure were given the chance to explain. There were 89 responses, most of which sounded similar themes:

■ "Can't train without funds but trying to get work around training is not easy and continually told if you miss sessions you don't get selected."

■ "No stable job, living off casual work, and supported by my mum. My sport provides no money for me."

■ "Paycheck depends on how I preform at a major championships once every 2-4 years. If I do not preform well in one moment I cannot financially support myself."

Last year, sparked in part by a ruling from a German court, the IOC allowed national Olympic committees to relax guidelines on what's known as Rule 40 — a rule that restricts athletes from fully cashing in on their marketing potential while the Olympics are ongoing. A handful of countries made changes. But were they enough? Four out of five athletes in the survey agreed that

they should be given the right to "build and sell their own image right at the Olympic Games," which is often the only time

many of them will have such a massive platform.

The IOC and its affiliates have long argued that they need an uncluttered advertising space, especially during the games, to preserve the value of Olympic sponsorships, which, in turn, allows them to provide the huge stage on which the athletes compete. That reality wasn't lost on many of the 111 athletes who responded when asked for comments about how to gain control of their brand during the Olympics.



SCHORR

From Page 28

Woods also qualified to the NAIA National Championships and advanced to the second round, as the Owls routed Midland University, 8-1, before losing to Keiser, 2-5.

This season, William Woods is under a new coach—Chance

Joosts. The Owls won their season debut early this month after whipping William Jewell College in the ITA Cup, 6-1.

Schorr will bring to Williams Woods his impressive record, which includes multiple junior championships on Saipan and off-island, and a rich experience playing in high-level tournaments.

The many-time CNMI national team member played in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships since he was 11 years old and also saw action in ITF Juniors competition in Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, and Australia. He also trained at the Oceania Tennis Federation/ITF training facility in Fiji.

IT&E

From Page 28

retero in the finals, 25-27, 22-20, 21-19.

In the mixed BB doubles finals, Fernandez teamed up

with Cris Hilario and they needed only two games to down Jeff Riman and Cristy Villafior, 21-14. Earlier in the semis, Hilario and Fernandez topped Shirley Kim and Ronnie Lacbayo, while Villafior

and Riman won over Roger Vales and Loida Ito.

Hilario got his second championship in NMBA's season opener after partnering with Patrick Fernandez in outclassing Janelle and Villafior in the men's BB doubles finals, 19-21, 21-14, 21-15.

Patrick also earned his second title, as he joined forces with Ferdie Arago in ruling the men's AB doubles division. Arago and Fernandez bagged the championship following a 21-19, 21-14 triumph against Daniel Macario and Walker.

Completing the champions list of last weekend's tournament were Ito and Merlie Savellano, who downed Elna Curate and Borja, 21-18, 19-21, 21-17, and Villafior and Bartolome, 21-18, 21-19.

Winners in the six divisions were honored in a brief awards ceremony last night, while NMBA acknowledged IT&E's support to the group's first competition for 2020.

"Our sincerest thanks to IT&E for their continued support to our program. They have been sponsoring our tournament in the last five years and it is through generous companies like them that we are able to provide opportunities to our players," NMBA president Merlie Tolentino said.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Daniel Macario receives a shot from Chris Hilario during their game in the IT&E Badminton Tournament 2020 last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

MAWATI

From Page 28

season's finalist Connie's BBQ.

The duo combined for Mawati's last 10 points with Pastrana scoring 6 and Ferrer adding 4. Pastrana came to Mawati's rescue in the final canto after being held to one field goal in the third. He finished with 25 points, while Ferrer and Jerome Directo also had double figures with 16 and 15 markers, respectively.

Mawati led from start to finish, but never managed to pull away, as Eric Joe kept Connie's BBQ in the game.

Joe used his height and heft to cherry pick in the paint and set up his teammates, as he scored 21 points before getting the boot in the last four minutes of the match due to a league infraction. He made 9 points in the fourth canto where Connie's BBQ was able to force a deadlock 59-all, before Joe's departure hurt the team's chances of completing its comeback bid.

Third Game

Mawati 66—Pastrana 25, Ferrer 16, Directo 15, Demapan 6, Gontar 6, Mateo 5, Nonato 2.

Connie's BBQ 61—Joe 21, Danao 8, Mateo 7, Dayao 6, Esmores 4, Centina 4, Sienna 2, Bongolan 2, Olivar 2.

Scoring by quarters: 14-12, 34-26, 45-41, 66-61.

Fourth Game

Napa 100—Rafols 19, Ege 13, Rosario 13, Fundador 12, Jugos 8, Ebuen 8, Fitial 8, Devero 8, Tibayan 4, De Guzman 2, Acosta 2, Dacumos 2.

IT&E 59—Santos 23, Deleon Guerrero 14, Cruz 6, Pamintuan 4, Aglipay 4, Bennet 2, Palacios 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-14, 49-25, 73-44, 100-59.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mawati's Bradley Demapan battles Connie's BBQ's Jesse Sienna for the ball during the opening tip of their match in the One Pacific caging last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



LeBron's
clutch jumper
lifts Lakers
past Celtics

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune Sports

Betts draws big
cheer, drives
in run during
Dodgers debut

PAGE 25



28 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Schorr upbeat on collegiate move

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

After a successful junior career, four-time Northern Marianas Sports Association/Tan Siu Lin Foundation Athlete of the Year awardee Robbie Schorr is looking forward to starting a new chapter in his tennis life this fall when he moves up to the collegiate ranks.

The Saipan International School senior has committed to play for William Woods University after earning an athletic scholarship from the school based in Fulton, Mis-



souri. "I'm thankful for this opportunity and glad to be playing college tennis," said Schorr, who won the gold medal in the team event in the Pacific Games last year in Samoa and also bagged a silver in the men's doubles.

"It wouldn't have been possible without the help of the coaches I've had, especially coach Jeff (Race), all my teammates and opponents, and my parents for always supporting me. I'm looking forward to playing as many games as I can and for a school that I'm excited to go to," the 17-year-old said.

William Woods competes in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Intercollegiate Tennis Association. In the 2018-2019 season, the Owls posted an impressive 22-3 record, topping the American Midwest Conference Heart of America Championships after dominating Missouri Valley in the finals, 5-0, besides beating nine other schools. William

See SCHORR on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Robbie Schorr returns to TJ Bellama during their men's singles title match in the 2020 White Coconut Tennis Classic early this month at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.



Mawati, Napa triumph



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mawati's Bradley Demapan, center, tries to recover the loose ball against Connie's BBQ players Ryan Hipolito, left, and Ronald Es-mores during the first quarter of their game in the One Pacific caging last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Mawati and Napa topped their respective opponents to complete the opening day winners list in the One Pacific Promotional Basketball League 2020 last Sunday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Mawati played in the third game and outclassed Connie's BBQ, 66-61, while NAPA routed IT&E in the nightcap, 100-59, to join 6JMS/Sea Bridges and Blue Haus in the win column of the 16-team league.

Napa exploded for 30 points in the first quarter to take early control of its game against IT&E and kept the comfortable lead in the last three frames to cruise to victory.

Ivan Devero and Alken Ege teamed up in giving NAPA a good start, as they scored 8 points apiece in the first-period onslaught to lift their team to a 30-14 advantage.

Napa then widened the gap in the second quarter, 49-25, as two more players stepped up with Arnexel Rosario firing 9 markers and Paulo Rafols chipping in 7 markers, including their last 6 points in that period.

Despite the big lead in the first half, Napa showed no mercy to IT&E in the second with Jugos teaming up with Rafols and Rosario in delivering the killer blows.

Meanwhile, Rodel Pastrana and Frank Ferrer hit clutch baskets to help Mawati thwart last

See MAWATI on Page 27



IT&E sponsors badminton season opener

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Northern Marianas Badminton Association held its first competition of the season with the staging of the IT&E Badminton Tournament 2020 last weekend at the TSL Sports Complex.

The IT&E-sponsored event featured a doubles contest in six divisions: women's and men's BB, men's AB, women's C, and mixed AB and BB categories.

In the women's BB doubles, duo of Janelle Pangilinan and Yoko Borja prevailed over three other pairs. Pangilinan, who suited up the CNMI National Team in last year's



Pacific Games in Samoa, and Borja reached the finals after beating Miles Guerrero and Lanie Bartolome, 21-18, 21-17, and went on to clinch the division crown following another victory over Jaja Samonte and Windy Fernandez, 23-11, 19-21, 21-17.

Janelle also played in the mixed AB doubles with Bryan Charlson and they defeated Jordan Pangilinan and Guer-

See IT&E on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Yoko Borja hits a shot near the net during her and Elna Curate's doubles game against Loida Ito and Merlie Savellano in the IT&E Badminton Tournament 2020 last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.